GENE AUTRY

A PHANTOM GOLD MINE... A LONG, CRUEL BULLWHIP... A SECRET CAVE... A MAN WITH A TIP-TILTED HAT... A KIDNAPED GIRL... GUNS THAT SPIT QUICK DEATH... ALL PLAY IMPORTANT PARTS IN **GENE AUTRY'S** NEWEST *and* MOST EXCITING ADVENTURE,

The GHOST MINE

IKE HARRIS

BULL RIGGS

BILL DRAKE

BIFF

RIDING NOWHERE IN PARTICULAR *and* LOOKING FOR ADVENTURE, THE DAREDEVIL **GENE AUTRY** CROSSES THE TRAIL OF HIS OLD FRIEND, **IKE HARRIS**, *and* DECIDES TO STOP LONG ENOUGH TO HELP TRACK DOWN THE MYSTERIOUS BANDITS WHO HAVE BEEN ROBBING IKE'S FREIGHT LINE.

CURLY

DURING THE FOLLOWING EXCITING HOURS, **GENE** MATCHES WITS *and* BULLETS WITH THE BRAWNY **BULL RIGGS**, OWNER OF THE LASHING WHIP... THE SHIFTY **BILL DRAKE**, OPERATOR OF THE GHOST CANYON MINE.. **BIFF**, THE DERBY-HATTED BARTENDER-SPY *and* THE FAST-SHOOTING **CURLY**.

ALSO HE MEETS PRETTY **MILLY NOLAN**, WHO RISKS HER LIFE TO PROVE THAT SHE IS THE REAL OWNER OF THE OLD **GHOST MINE**.

MILLY NOLAN

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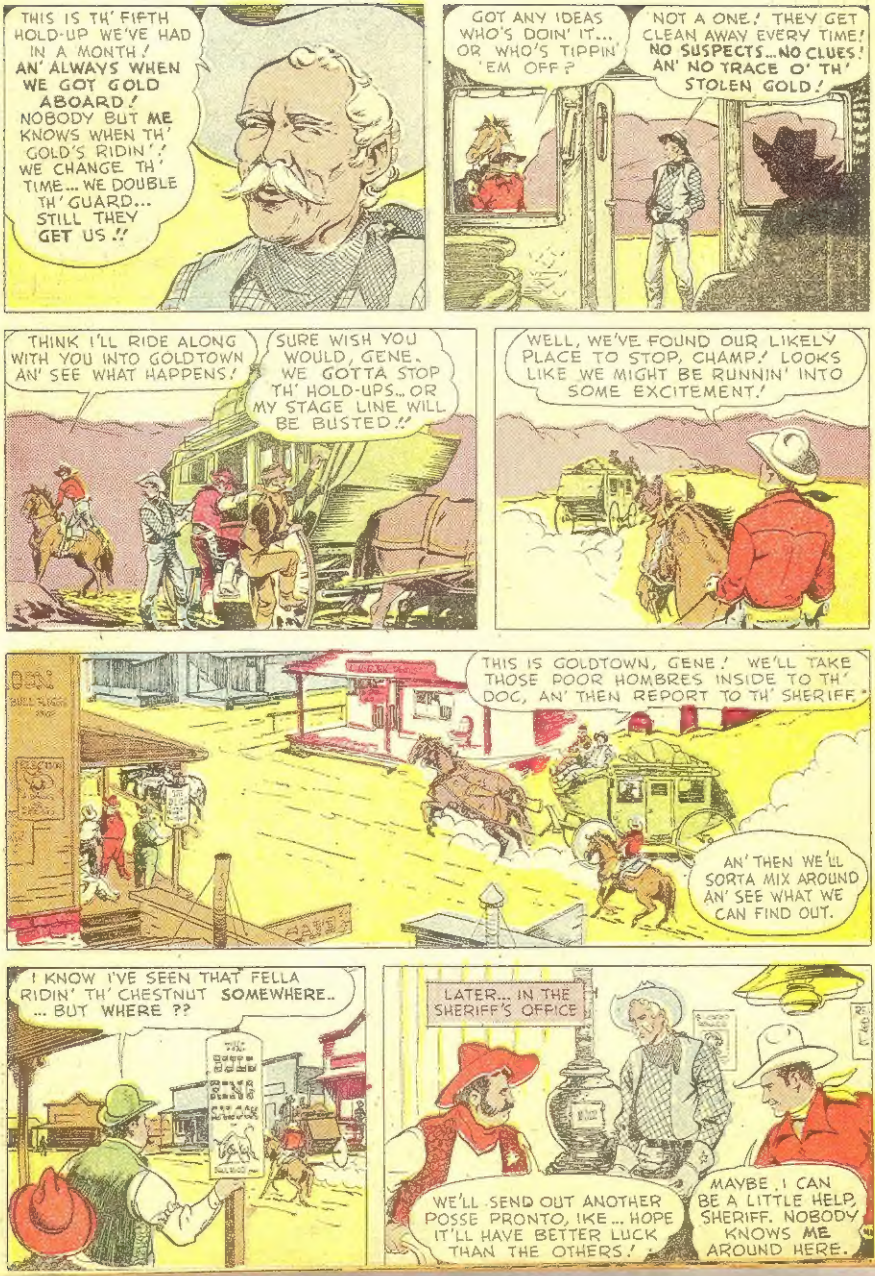
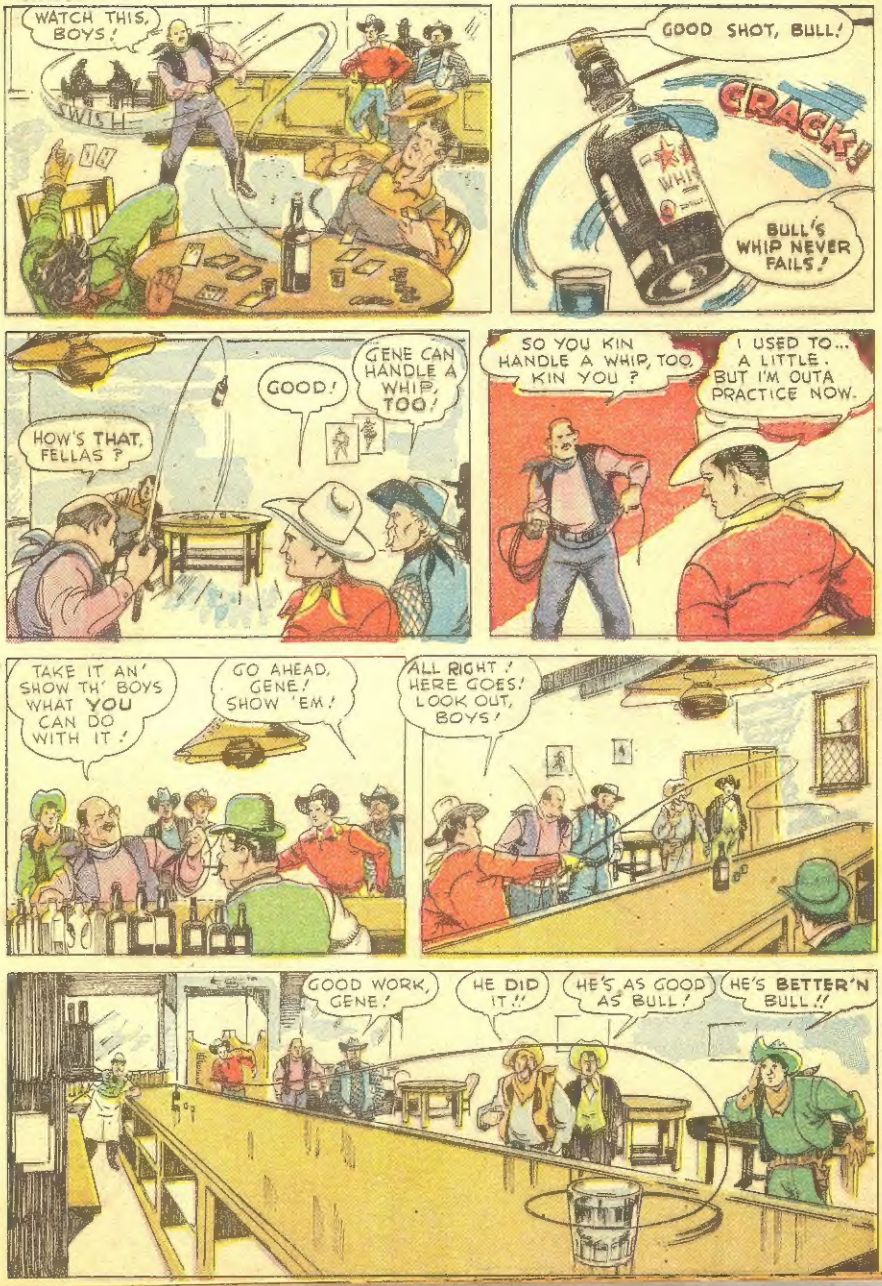
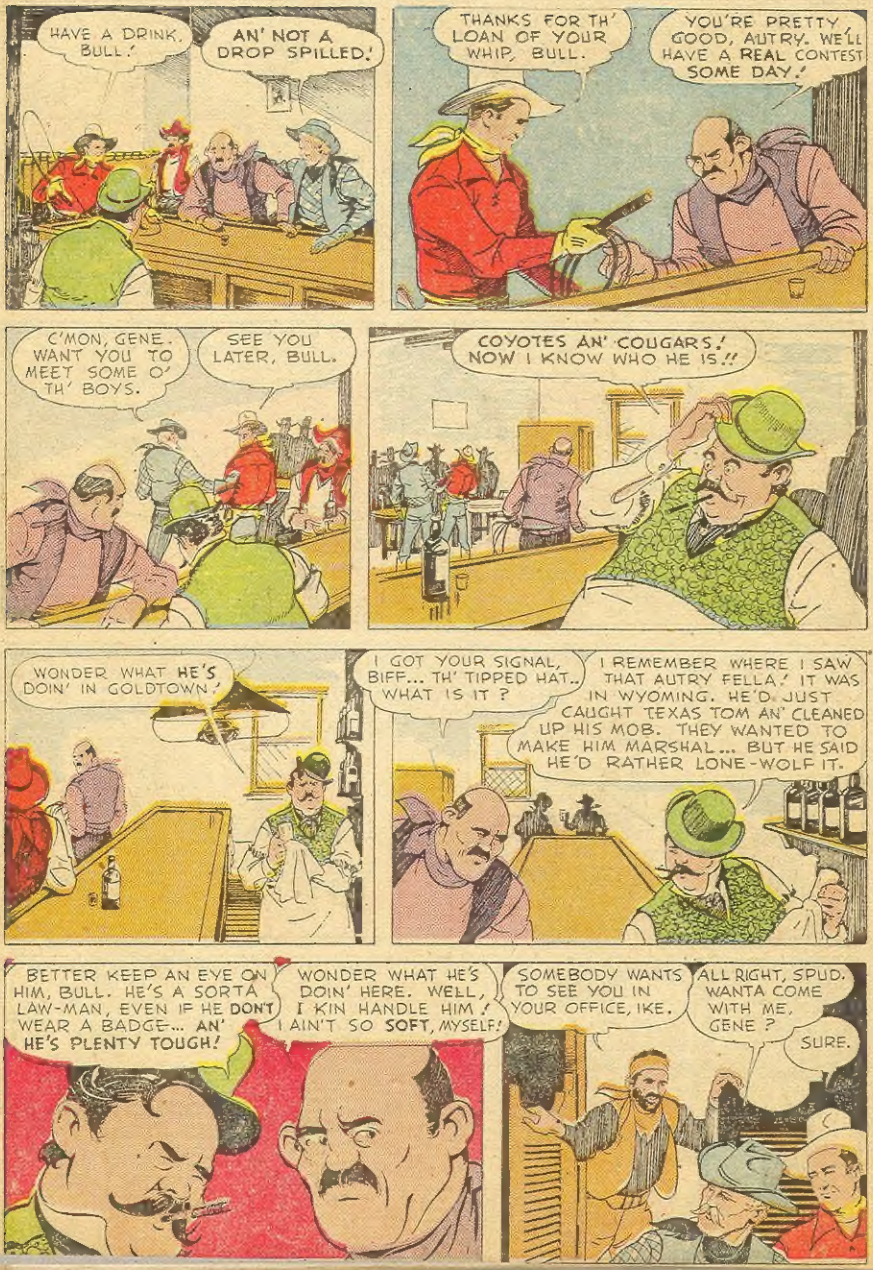
SURE SEEMS GOOD TO BE FOOTLOOSE FOR AWHILE, DOESN'T IT, CHAMP? WE'LL JUST KEEP ON RIDIN' TILL WE FIND A LIKELY PLACE TO STOP!
Gene AUTRY
IN
THE GHOST MINE
LOOKS LIKE A RUNAWAY DOWN THERE!
WE GOTTA BEAT 'EM TO THAT CURVE, OR THEY'LL GO OVER TH' CLIFF!
THIS'LL STOP 'EM!
STEADY, CHAMP!
TAKE IT EASY, FELLAS!
GA 47-447
THESE HORSES DIDN'T BREAK LOOSE! SOMEBODY CUT 'EM LOOSE! WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE....

WHATEVER THEY WERE PULLIN' IS PROB'LY STRANDED UP THIS GORGE SOMEWHERE.
THERE IT IS NOW... A STAGE! WONDER WHAT HAPPENED.
HOWDY! ARE THESE YOUR HORSES?
THEY SURE ARE! AN' AM I GLAD TO SEE 'EM AGAIN!
IKE HARRIS!
WELL, IF IT AIN'T GENE AUTRY! WHERE'D YOU COME FROM?
I WAS JUST RIDIN' AROUND WHEN I SPOTTED YOUR RUNAWAYS. WHAT HAPPENED?
A COUPLA HI-JACKERS JUMPED US! THEY CUT OUR HORSES LOOSE AN' SENT 'EM HI-TAILIN' DOWN TH' ROAD. THEN THEY TOOK OUR FREIGHT AN' VAMOOSED! LUCKY WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY PASSENGERS!
WHAT KINDA FREIGHT?
GOLD! WE PUT UP A FIGHT AS LONG AS WE COULD! SPUD, THERE, GOT A BULLET ALONGSIDE HIS HEAD. THEY WINGED ONE O' TH' GUARDS AN' THERE'S ANOTHER IN TH' COACH DRILLED THROUGH TH' LEG!
HOW COME YOU'RE CARRYIN' GOLD, IKE?
I BEEN RUNNIN' TH' FREIGHT AN' PASSENGER COACH BETWEEN GOLDTOWN AN' TH' RAILROAD AT CACTUS JUNCTION. BEEN CARRYIN' A LOTTA GOLD SHIPMENTS FROM TH' SMELTER AT GOLDTOWN.


THIS IS TH' FIFTH HOLD-UP WE'VE HAD IN A MONTH! AN' ALWAYS WHEN WE GOT GOLD ABOARD! NOBODY BUT ME KNOWS WHEN TH' GOLD'S RIDIN'! WE CHANGE TH' TIME... WE DOUBLE TH' GUARD... STILL THEY GET US!!
GOT ANY IDEAS WHO'S DOIN' IT... OR WHO'S TIPPIN' 'EM OFF?
NOT A ONE! THEY GET CLEAN AWAY EVERY TIME! NO SUSPECTS...NO CLUES! AN' NO TRACE O' TH' STOLEN GOLD!
THINK I'LL RIDE ALONG WITH YOU INTO GOLDTOWN AN' SEE WHAT HAPPENS!
SURE WISH YOU WOULD, GENE. WE GOTTA STOP TH' HOLD-UPS... OR MY STAGE LINE WILL BE BUSTED!!
WELL, WE'VE FOUND OUR LIKELY PLACE TO STOP, CHAMP! LOOKS LIKE WE MIGHT BE RUNNIN' INTO SOME EXCITEMENT!
THIS IS GOLDTOWN, GENE! WE'LL TAKE THOSE POOR HOMBRES INSIDE TO TH' DOC, AN' THEN REPORT TO TH' SHERIFF.
AN' THEN WE'LL SORTA MIX AROUND AN' SEE WHAT WE CAN FIND OUT.
I KNOW I'VE SEEN THAT FELLA RIDIN' TH' CHESTNUT SOMEWHERE.. ... BUT WHERE ??
LATER... IN THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE
WE'LL SEND OUT ANOTHER POSSE PRONTO, IKE... HOPE IT'LL HAVE BETTER LUCK THAN THE OTHERS!
MAYBE I CAN BE A LITTLE HELP, SHERIFF. NOBODY KNOWS ME AROUND HERE.

SURE BE GLAD OF ANY HELP YOU KIN GIVE US, AUTRY!
GENE'S CLEANED UP A LOTTA BAD MESSES. I'M BANKIN' ON HIM THIS TIME.
TH' BULL RING'S TH' TOWN HANG-OUT, GENE.
IT OUGHTA BE A GOOD PLACE TO LEARN SOMETHING. LET'S DRIFT IN.
BULL
SHERIFF'S OFFICE
THERE'S TH' HOMBRE I WAS TELLIN' YOU ABOUT, BULL! BLAMED IF I CAN REMEMBER WHERE I SAW HIM BEFORE.
WON'T TAKE ME LONG TO FIND OUT WHO... AN' WHAT.. HE IS, BIFF!
HOWDY, IKE. HEAR YOU'VE HAD ANOTHER HOLD-UP! S'POSE TH' SHERIFF'S ROUNDIN' UP A POSSE! HE OUGHTA NAB TH' HI-JACKERS THIS TIME!
I HOPE SO! THIS IS BULL RIGGS, GENE. BULL, MEET MY OLD FRIEND, GENE AUTRY.
HOWDY! THAT'S A WICKED-LOOKIN' WHIP YOU GOT THERE!
IT IS WICKED! IT KNOWS A LOTTA TRICKS!
SHOW TH' STRANGER A COUPLA TH' WHIP'S TRICKS, BULL.
YEAH. I'D LIKE TO SEE 'EM.
OKAY! ALWAYS AIM T' PLEASE TH' CUSTOMERS.

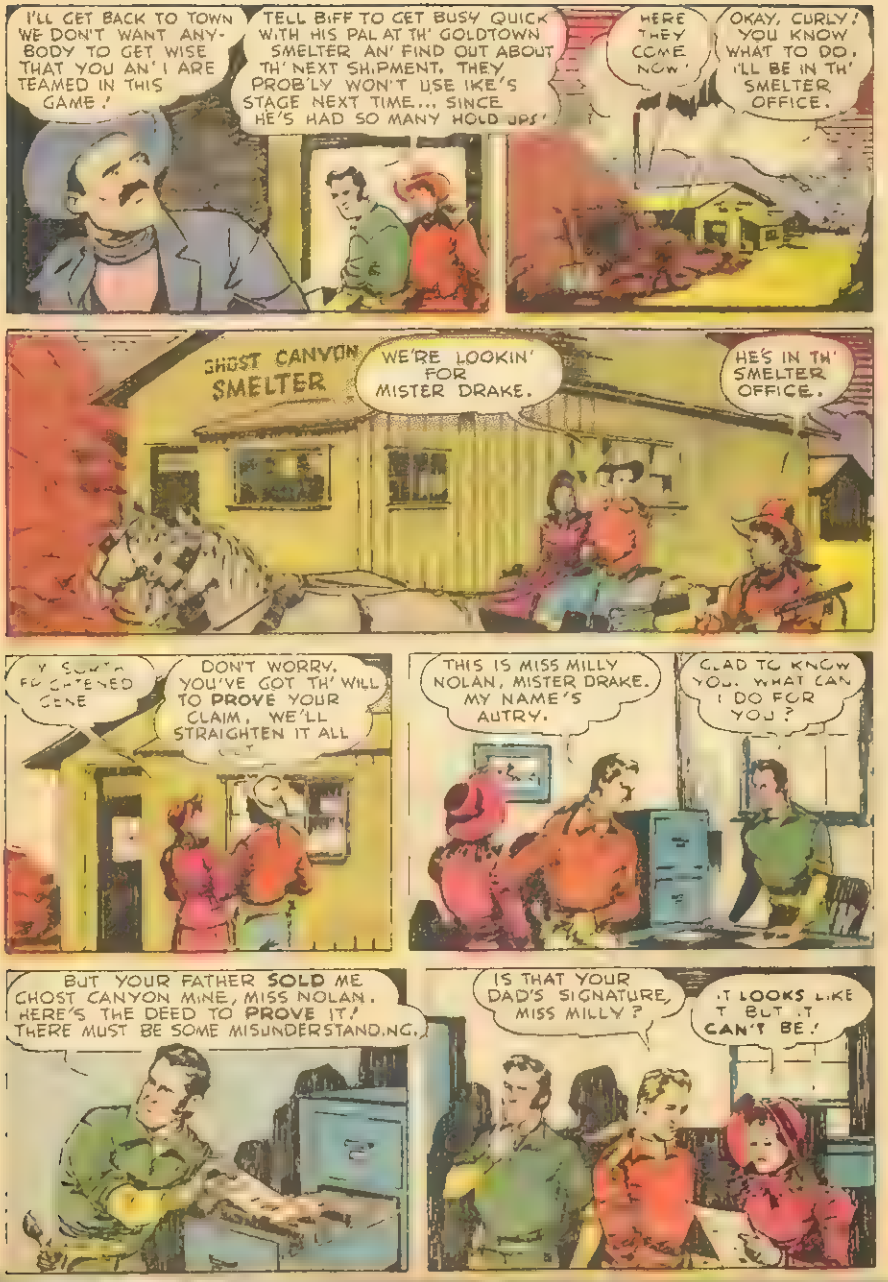

WATCH THIS, BOYS!
SWISH
GOOD SHOT, BULL!
CRACK!
BULL'S WHIP NEVER FAILS!
HOW'S THAT, FELLAS?
GOOD!
GENE CAN HANDLE A WHIP, TOO!
SO YOU KIN HANDLE A WHIP, TOO, KIN YOU?
I USED TO... A LITTLE. BUT I'M OUTA PRACTICE NOW.
TAKE IT AN' SHOW TH' BOYS WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH IT!
GO AHEAD, GENE! SHOW 'EM!
ALL RIGHT! HERE GOES! LOOK OUT, BOYS!
GOOD WORK, GENE!
HE DID IT!!
HE'S AS GOOD AS BULL!
HE'S BETTER'N BULL!!

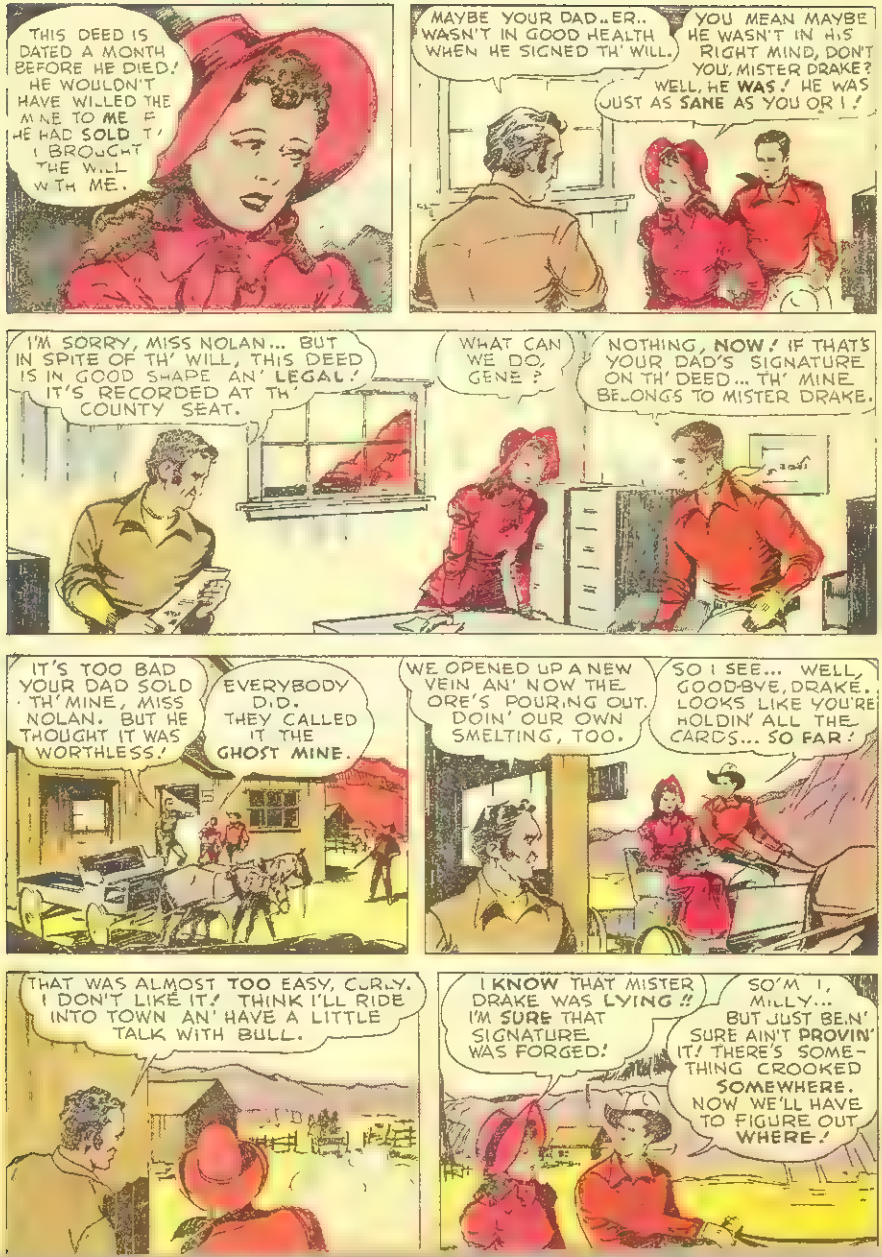

HAVE A DRINK, BULL!
AN' NOT A DROP SPILLED!
THANKS FOR TH' LOAN OF YOUR WHIP, BULL.
YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD, AUTRY. WE'LL HAVE A REAL CONTEST SOME DAY!
C'MON, GENE. WANT YOU TO MEET SOME O' TH' BOYS.
SEE YOU LATER, BULL.
COYOTES AN' COUGARS! NOW I KNOW WHO HE IS!!
WONDER WHAT HE'S DOIN' IN GOLDTOWN?
I GOT YOUR SIGNAL, BIFF... TH' TIPPED HAT.. WHAT IS IT?
I REMEMBER WHERE I SAW THAT AUTRY FELLA! IT WAS IN WYOMING. HE'D JUST CAUGHT TEXAS TOM AN' CLEANED UP HIS MOB. THEY WANTED TO MAKE HIM MARSHAL... BUT HE SAID HE'D RATHER LONE-WOLF IT.
BETTER KEEP AN EYE ON HIM, BULL. HE'S A SORTA LAW-MAN, EVEN IF HE DON'T WEAR A BADGE... AN' HE'S PLENTY TOUGH!
WONDER WHAT HE'S DOIN' HERE. WELL, I KIN HANDLE HIM! I AIN'T SO SOFT, MYSELF!
SOMEBODY WANTS TO SEE YOU IN YOUR OFFICE, IKE.
ALL RIGHT, SPUD. WANTA COME WITH ME, GENE?
SURE.

FREIGHT WAREH
WHO IS IT, SPUD?
YOU'LL SEE.
MILLY NOLAN! I'M SURE GLAD TO SEE YOU!
AND I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU, UNCLE IKE.
MILLY, THIS IS GENE AUTRY. GENE, MEET MILLY NOLAN. HER DAD WAS ONE O MY BEST FRIENDS. WHEN HE DIED, MILLY MOVED AWAY FROM TOWN.
I JUST HEARD THAT DAD'S OLD GHOST CANYON MINE HAD STARTED UP AGAIN. IS IT TRUE, UNCLE IKE?
YES, IT IS. A MAN NAMED BILL DRAKE'S RUNNIN' IT. CERTAINLY WAS A S'PRISE TO EVERY BODY IN GOLDTOWN. WE ALL THOUGHT TH' MINE WAS WORTHLESS!!
DRAKE CLAIMS HE BOUGHT TH' MINE FROM YOUR DAD JUST BEFORE HE DIED.
WELL, HE DIDN'T! DAD MADE A WILL THE DAY BEFORE HE DIED AND LEFT THE MINE TO ME! I KNOW DAD DIDN'T SELL IT TO ANYBODY!
THAT'S WHY I HURRIED TO GOLDTOWN THE MINUTE I HEARD ABOUT IT! THAT MISTER DRAKE HAS NO RIGHT TO RUN THAT MINE!
TH' BEST THING TO DO IS FIND DRAKE AN' TALK TO HIM. I'LL BE GLAD TO RIDE OUT TO THE MINE WITH YOU, MISS MILLY.
GOOD! SPUD CAN HITCH UP TH' BUCKBOARD FOR YOU. AN' WHILE YOU'RE GONE, I'LL GET YOU A ROOM AT MRS. MURPHY'S BOARDING HOUSE, MILLY.
I'VE GOT DAD'S WILL WITH ME.
WE'LL FIND OUT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT.

WHO'S THE PRETTY GAL WITH AUTRY, SPUD?
SHE'S OLD HANK NOLAN'S DAUGHTER, BIFF. HER PA USED TO OWN TH' GHOST CANYON MINE. SHE AN' AUTRY ARE RIDIN' OUT TO TH' MINE TO TALK TO DRAKE.
MILLY SAYS DRAKE'S GOT NO RIGHT TO RUN TH' MINE. SHE CLAIMS SHE OWNS IT!
NO CREDIT
SHE'S GOT HER PA'S WILL WITH HER PROVIN' THAT HE LEFT TH' MINE TO HER!
I GOT YOUR SIGNAL, BIFF. WHAT'S TH' NEWS THIS TIME?
OLD NOLAN'S GAL IS IN TOWN. SHE'S ON HER WAY TO TH' MINE WITH AUTRY. THEY'RE DRIVIN' A BUCKBOARD.
I'LL HUSTLE OUT TO TH' MINE. I CAN EASY BEAT THAT BUCK-BOARD. YOU KEEP YOUR EYES AN' EARS OPEN, BIFF.
THAT GAL'S LIABLE TO RAISE PLENTY O' TROUBLE. I GOTTA WARN DRAKE!
NO SIGN OF AUTRY AN' TH' GIRL YET. I'LL GO IN TH' BACK WAY.
GHOST CANYON MINE NO TRESPASSING

HEY DRAKE
BACK HERE IN' TH' PACKING ROOM!
PLENTY! HANK NOLAN'S GAL
GENE AUTRY! I'VE HEARD OF HIM! HE'S A SORTA LAW MAN AN' PLENTY SMART!!
SMART
FAKE
AN' THAT WE AIN'T DOIN' ANY MININ' AT A
STOLEN
RUIN IT!!

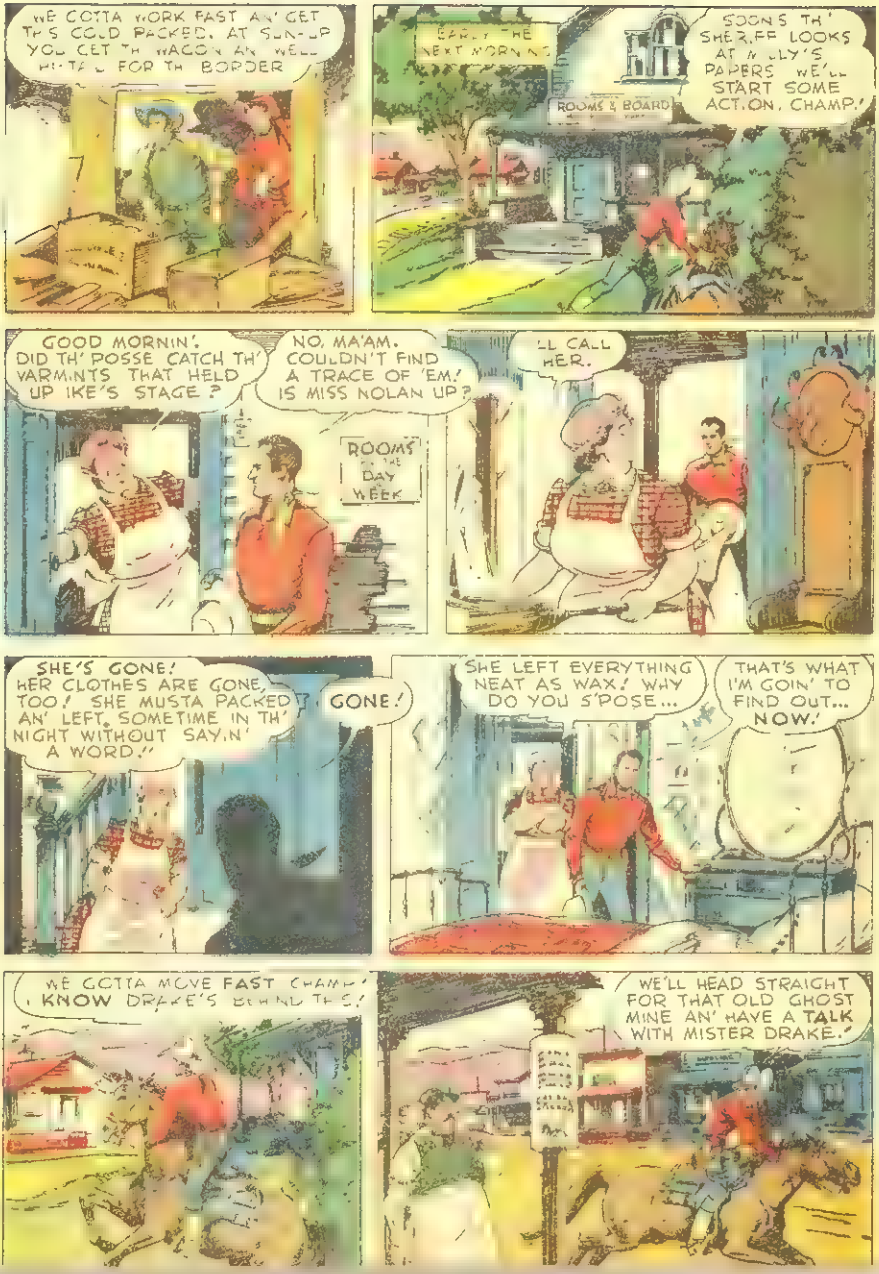

I'LL GET BACK TO TOWN WE DON'T WANT ANYBODY TO GET WISE THAT YOU AN' I ARE TEAMED IN THIS GAME.'
TELL BIFF TO GET BUSY QUICK WITH HIS PAL AT TH' GOLDTOWN SMELTER AN' FIND OUT ABOUT TH' NEXT SHIPMENT. THEY PROB'LY WON'T USE IKE'S STAGE NEXT TIME... SINCE HE'S HAD SO MANY HOLD UPS!
HERE THEY COME NOW!
OKAY, CURLY! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO. I'LL BE IN TH' SMELTER OFFICE.
GHOST CANYON SMELTER
WE'RE LOOKIN' FOR MISTER DRAKE.
HE'S IN TH' SMELTER OFFICE.
DON'T WORRY. YOU'VE GOT TH' WILL TO PROVE YOUR CLAIM, WE'LL STRAIGHTEN IT ALL
THIS IS MISS MILLY NOLAN, MISTER DRAKE. MY NAME'S AUTRY.
GLAD TO KNOW YOU. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
BUT YOUR FATHER SOLD ME GHOST CANYON MINE, MISS NOLAN. HERE'S THE DEED TO PROVE IT! THERE MUST BE SOME MISUNDERSTANDING.
IS THAT YOUR DAD'S SIGNATURE, MISS MILLY?
IT LOOKS LIKE IT BUT IT CAN'T BE!

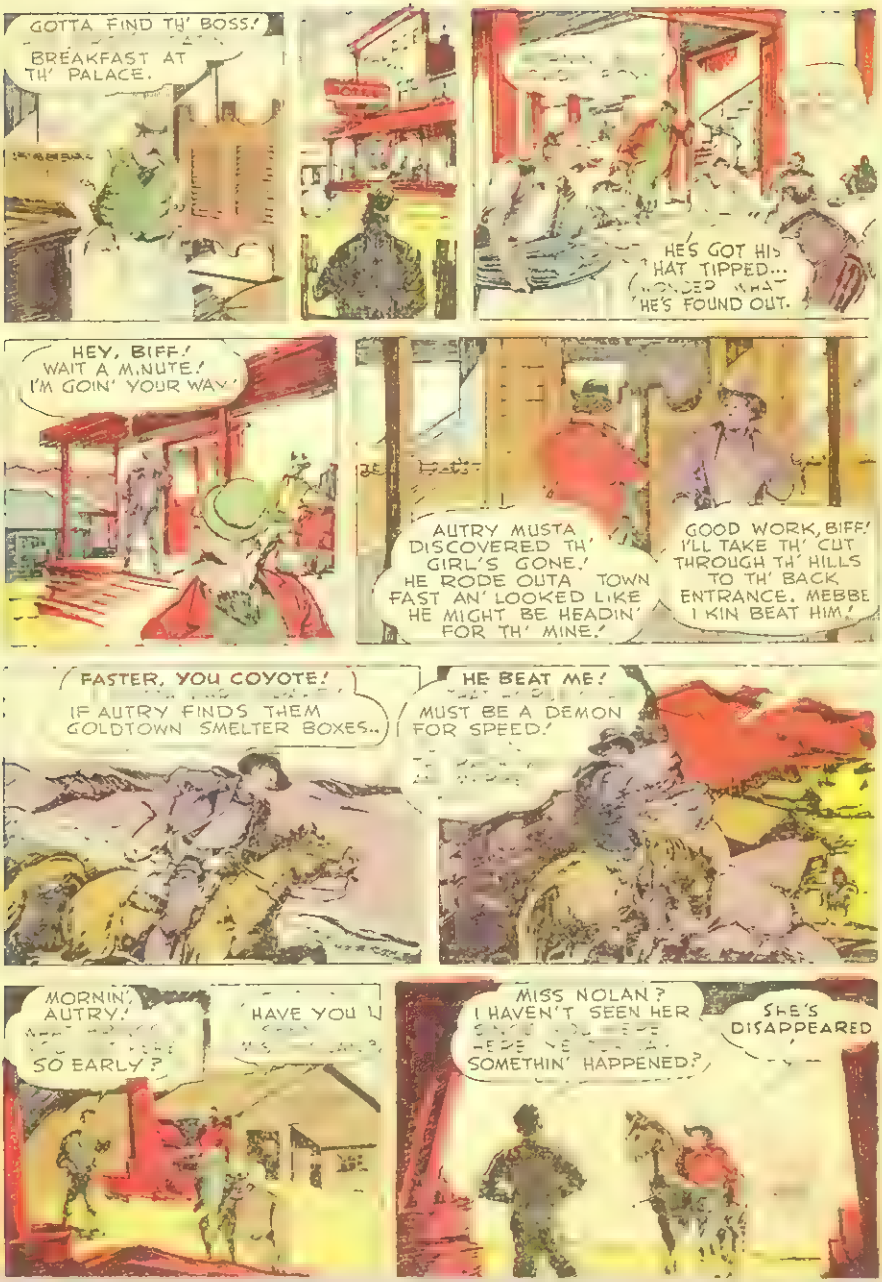

THIS DEED IS DATED A MONTH BEFORE HE DIED! HE WOULDN'T HAVE WILLED THE MINE TO ME IF HE HAD SOLD IT! I BROUGHT THE WILL WITH ME.
MAYBE YOUR DAD..ER.. WASN'T IN GOOD HEALTH WHEN HE SIGNED TH' WILL.
YOU MEAN MAYBE HE WASN'T IN HIS RIGHT MIND, DON'T YOU, MISTER DRAKE? WELL, HE WAS! HE WAS JUST AS SANE AS YOU OR I!
I'M SORRY, MISS NOLAN... BUT IN SPITE OF TH' WILL, THIS DEED IS IN GOOD SHAPE AN' LEGAL! IT'S RECORDED AT TH' COUNTY SEAT.
WHAT CAN WE DO, GENE?
NOTHING, NOW! IF THAT'S YOUR DAD'S SIGNATURE ON TH' DEED... TH' MINE BELONGS TO MISTER DRAKE.
IT'S TOO BAD YOUR DAD SOLD TH' MINE, MISS NOLAN. BUT HE THOUGHT IT WAS WORTHLESS!
EVERYBODY DID. THEY CALLED IT THE GHOST MINE.
WE OPENED UP A NEW VEIN AN' NOW THE ORE'S POURING OUT. DOIN' OUR OWN SMELTING, TOO.
SO I SEE... WELL, GOOD-BYE, DRAKE. LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE HOLDIN' ALL THE CARDS... SO FAR!
THAT WAS ALMOST TOO EASY, CURLY. I DON'T LIKE IT! THINK I'LL RIDE INTO TOWN AN' HAVE A LITTLE TALK WITH BULL.
I KNOW THAT MISTER DRAKE WAS LYING!! I'M SURE THAT SIGNATURE WAS FORGED!
SO'M I, MILLY... BUT JUST BEIN' SURE AIN'T PROVIN' IT! THERE'S SOMETHING CROOKED SOMEWHERE. NOW WE'LL HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHERE!

I BROUGHT SOME LETTERS DAD WROTE. IF WE COMPARE THE SIGNATURES ON THE LETTERS AND THE WILL WITH THE ONE ON THE DEED MAYBE WE CAN PROVE THE FORGERY
MAYBE. BUT IT'LL TAKE AN EXPERT TO DO IT. WE'LL TAKE TH' WILL AN TH' LETTERS TO TH' SHERIFF TOMORROW AN START TH' INVESTIGATION PRONTO! TH' SHERIFF'S OUT WITH A POSSE, OUTLAW HUNTIN', NOW.
A SHORT TIME LATER.. AT THE BULL RING RANCH.
HOWDY, MISTER DRAKE. DON'T SEE YOU VERY OFTEN. GUESS THE OL' GHOST MINE MUST BE KEEPIN YOU PRETTY BUSY!
EVENIN', BULL. HOWDY, BIFF.
HOW'D YOU MAKE OUT WITH AUTRY AN' TH' GAL, DRAKE?
THE GAME'S UP, 'M AFRAID, BULL!
THE GIRL'S GOT HER OLD MAN'S WILL WITH HER. THEY'LL COMPARE THE SIGNATURES AN' TH' FORGERY 'LL BE PROVED SOONER OR LATER! THAT AUTRY'S SMART! HE'LL NOSE OUT TH' WHOLE DEAL!
WE GOTTA GET HOLD OF TH' GIRL AN' KEEP HER UNDER COVER TILL YOU KIN GET TH' GOLD AN' YOURSELF OUTA TH' STATE, DRAKE!"
YEAH. YOU'RE IN TH' CLEAR BULL. NOBODY KNOWS YOURE MIXED UP WITH TH' GHOST MINE!
DO YOU KNOW WHERE TH' GIRL'S STAYIN', BIFF?
YEAH. AT MRS. MURPHY'S BOARDING HOUSE. IN TH' BACK CORNER ROOM ON TH' FIRST FLOOR. I HEARD IKE HARRIS TELLIN' SPUD.
YOU AN' CURLY GRAB TH' GIRL TONIGHT, DRAKE. THEN TOMORROW YOU BEAT IT ACROSS TH' BORDER. I'LL MEET YOU LATER.
WE'LL BOTH BE RICH, BULL! OUR LITTLE GAME'S PAID OFF FINE, EVEN IF IT IS ENDIN SOONER THAN WE PLANNED!
THIS IS THE WINDOW OF HER ROOM
SHE SURE MUST BE SOUND ASLEEP BY THIS

SHHH-H! QUIET CURLY! SHE'S ASLEEP-ALL R CHT
THIS'LL KEEP YOU QUIET FOR AWHILE, SISTER!
HERE SHE IS, CURLY! PUT HER ON TH HORSE. I'LL GET HER TH YCS
I GOT EVERYTHING INCLUDIN ALL TH' LETTERS AN PAPERS N TH BUREAU DRAWER.
EVERYTHING IN TH' ROOM LOOKS AS NEAT AS IF THE GIRL HAD PACKED HERSELF, AN' VAMOOSED.
SOON'S WE GET OUTA TOWN WE'LL UNWRAP HER SO SHE WON'T SMOTHER.
TAKE IT EASY, SISTER. W LETTIN YOU LOOSE NOW.
MISTER DRAKE!
YEAH. IT'S ME ALL RIGHT, SISTER. NOW IF YOU DO LIKE I SAY, AN KEEP QUIET, NOBODY'LL HURT YOU!

RIDE STRAIGHT AHEAD, SISTER, AN' DON'T MAKE A SOUND, OR YOU'LL GET A BULLET THROUGH YOUR BACK!
WH-WHAT DO YOU W-WANT WITH ME? AND WHERE ARE YOU T-TAKING ME?
WE DON'T WANT NOTHIN' OF YOU EXCEPT TO KEEP YOU QUIET! AN' WE'RE TAKIN YOU TO YOUR OWN MINE!
WE'LL GO IN TH' BACK WAY, CURLY.
WE'LL PUT HER IN TH' ROOM WHERE THEY USED TO STORE EXPLOSIVES. IT'S DRY AN' IT'S GOT A GOOD STRONG DOOR!
HERE YOU ARE, SISTER! ALL NICE AN' COZY... AN' HERE'S YOUR DUDS. YOU KIN MAKE A BED OF THOSE OLD SACKS. AN' YOU KIN YELL YOUR HEAD OFF AN' NOBODY'LL HEAR YOU.
OH, PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME IN HERE!
YOU'LL BE OKAY HERE! THAT OLD VENTILATIN' SHAFT UP THERE LETS IN PLENTY OF AIR AN' CURLY WILL LEAVE YOU TH' CANDLE.
SHE'LL NEVER BREAK OUTA THERE! COVER UP TH' DOOR, CURLY, JUST IN CASE ANY SNOOPERS COME NOSIN' AROUND.
WHY DON'T WE JUST PUT HER OUTTA TH' WAY FOR GOOD? THEN SHE KIN NEVER TALK!
HER TALKIN' WON'T DO ANY HARM 'CAUSE WE'LL BE ACROSS TH' BORDER! AN' THERE'S A CHANCE NOBODY'LL FIND HER... UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE!


WE GOTTA WORK FAST AN' GET THIS COLD PACKED. AT SUN-UP YOU GET TH WAGON AN WE'LL HIT TH' TRAIL FOR TH BORDER
EARLY THE NEXT MORNING
ROOMS & BOARD
SOON'S TH' SHERIFF LOOKS AT WILLY'S PAPERS WE'LL START SOME ACTION, CHAMP!
GOOD MORNIN'. DID TH' POSSE CATCH TH' VARMINTS THAT HELD UP IKE'S STAGE?
NO, MA'AM. COULDN'T FIND A TRACE OF 'EM! IS MISS NOLAN UP?
ROOMS BY THE DAY WEEK
LL CALL HER.
SHE'S GONE! HER CLOTHES ARE GONE, TOO! SHE MUSTA PACKED AN' LEFT, SOMETIME IN TH' NIGHT WITHOUT SAYIN' A WORD!"
GONE!
SHE LEFT EVERYTHING NEAT AS WAX! WHY DO YOU S'POSE...
THAT'S WHAT I'M GOIN' TO FIND OUT... NOW!
WE GOTTA MOVE FAST CHAMP! I KNOW DRAKE'S BEHIND THIS!
WE'LL HEAD STRAIGHT FOR THAT OLD GHOST MINE AN' HAVE A TALK WITH MISTER DRAKE."


GOTTA FIND TH' BOSS!
BREAKFAST AT TH' PALACE.
HE'S GOT HIS HAT TIPPED... I WONDER WHAT HE'S FOUND OUT.
HEY, BIFF! WAIT A M.NUTE! I'M GOIN' YOUR WAY!
AUTRY MUSTA DISCOVERED TH' GIRL'S GONE! HE RODE OUTA TOWN FAST AN' LOOKED LIKE HE MIGHT BE HEADIN' FOR TH' MINE!
GOOD WORK, BIFF! I'LL TAKE TH' CUT THROUGH TH' HILLS TO TH' BACK ENTRANCE. MEBBE I KIN BEAT HIM!
FASTER, YOU COYOTE! IF AUTRY FINDS THEM GOLDTOWN SMELTER BOXES..
HE BEAT ME! MUST BE A DEMON FOR SPEED!
MORNIN' AUTRY! SO EARLY?
HAVE YOU U
MISS NOLAN? I HAVEN'T SEEN HER SOMETHIN' HAPPENED?
SHE'S DISAPPEARED

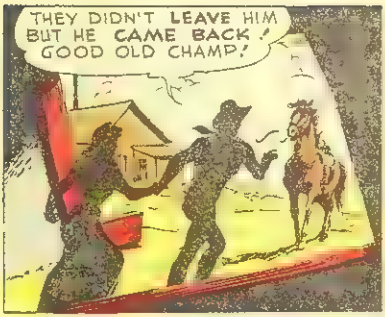
MAYBE SHE DECIDED THERE WAS NO USE STAYIN' AROUND AN' SHE WENT BACK HOME!
MAYBE!.. AS LONG AS I'M OUT HERE, HOW ABOUT SHOWIN' ME AROUND THIS OLD MINE?
THERE'S NOT MUCH TO SEE. WE AIN'T WORKIN' THIS
I AIM TO SEE WHAT THERE IS TO SEE!!! LEAD TH' WAY, DRAKE, AN' DON'T MOVE A FINGER TOWARD YOUR GUN!
KEEP MOVIN', DRAKE! WHAT'S THAT ROOM DOWN THERE?
J-JUST AN OLD STORE-ROOM!
SO THAT'S YOUR GAME!! STEALIN' GOLD FROM IKE'S STAGE AN' REPACKIN' IT IN YOUR OWN BOXES! I WAS LOOKIN' FOR A GIRL-KIDNAPER AN' I FIND TH' HI-JACKER TH' WHOLE COUNTY'S HUNTIN'!
NOW TELL ME WHERE MILLY NOLAN IS, YOU THIEVIN' VARMINT!
I DON'T KNOW WHERE SHE IS.. I SWEAR I DON'T!
BETTER TALK.. AN' TALK FAST. OR I'LL SHOOT IT OUTA YOU!
I... D-DON T..

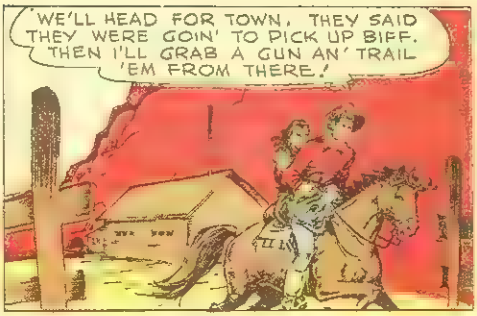
C'MON! TALK!! WHERE'S MILLY NOLAN?
NOT SO FAST, AUTRY!
BULL!
GUESS YOU'LL DO TH' TALKIN', IF THERE'S ANY TALKIN' DONE, AUTRY!! PUT UP YOUR HANDS! GET YOUR GUN BACK, DRAKE!
SO YOU'RE IN ON THIS CROOKED DEAL, TOO, BULL!
YEP! BUT I WON'T BE AROUND WHEN YOU SPILL TH' NEWS TO TH' SHERIFF... IF YOU LIVE TO SPILL IT!
YOU'RE HOLDIN' ACES IN THIS DEAL, BOYS! SO WHAT DID YOU DO WITH TH' GIRL?
THAT'S OUR BIZNESS! NOW START WALKIN'!
YOU SURE GOT HERE IN TH' NICK O' TIME, BULL!
YEAH! BIFF TIPPED ME OFF HE WAS HEADIN' THIS WAY. WE'LL PUT HIM IN ONE O' TH' OLD STORE-ROOMS AN' LEAVE HIM THERE!
YOU KIN HAVE A NICE, LONG REST IN HERE, AUTRY! TIE HIM UP, DRAKE!

WHERE'S MILLY NOLAN?
SHE'S SAFE AN' SOUND IN A NICE COZY ROOM LIKE THIS, AUTRY! NOBODY'LL EVER FIND TH' TWO O' YOU! SO YOU CAN ROT TOGETHER IN PEACE AN' QUIET IN TH' GIRL'S WORTHLESS MINE!
CURLY'LL BE BACK ANY MINUTE WITH TH' FREIGHT WAGON. THEN WE CAN BEAT IT FOR TH' BORDER. YOU'D BETTER COME, TOO, BULL!
THAT'S WHAT I AIM TO DO, NOW. WE KIN PICK UP BIFF ON TH' WAY. AN' BIFF AN' ME KIN START ANOTHER BULL RING SOUTH O' TH' BORDER.
NOW LET'S GET A BUNCH O' RUBBISH AN OLD BOXES AN' HIDE TH' DOOR JUST IN CASE SOMEBODY COMES DOWN AROUND
TWO BULLETS WOULDA KEPT AUTRY AN TH' GIRL QUIET FOREVER, BULL!
YEAH, I KNOW! BUT WE AIN'T KILLERS! NOBODY'S GONNA PIN A MURDER ON US! CHANCES ARE NOBODY'LL FIND 'EM TILL IT'S TOO LATE! BUT EVEN IF THEY DO TALK WE'LL BE TOO FAR AWAY FOR 'EM TO GET US!
HERE COMES CURLY WITH TH' WAGON NOW!
LET'S MOVE FAST! LOAD TH' STUFF AN' GET OUTA HERE!
GENE! GENE!! CAN YOU HEAR ME?
MILLY! WHERE ARE YOU? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YES, I MUST BE SOMEWHERE NEAR YOU. I HEARD THE VOICES THROUGH THE VENTILATOR SHAFT!
VENTILATOR SHAFT!?!! THEY'VE TIED ME HAND AND FOOT, MILLY. ARE YOU TIED, TOO?
NO! BUT THERE'S NO WAY OF MY GETTING OUT OF HERE. I CAN'T MOVE THE DOOR... AND MY CANDLE'S ALMOST GONE!

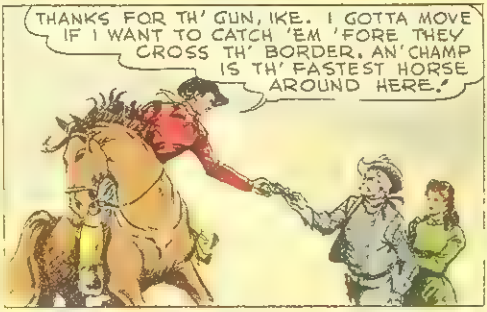
WE'VE GOTTA MOVE FAST! DO YOU THINK YOU COULD GET INTO TH' SHAFT AN' CLIMB THROUGH TO ME, MILLY?
CAN TRY!
TAKE IT EASY! IT'S OUR ONLY HOPE!
I'M UP HERE, GENE! IT LOOKS JUST BIG ENOUGH FOR ME TO SQUEEZE THROUGH.
I'M GETTING CLOSER, GENE! I CAN SEE THE LIGHT OF YOUR CANDLE!
GOOD GIRL! NOW BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU JUMP!
FINE! NOW, SOON'S YOU UNTIE ME, WE'LL FIGURE OUT A WAY OF GETTIN' OUT O' HERE!
JUST A MINUTE AND YOU'LL BE FREE, GENE.
WE'VE GOTTA GET OUT O' HERE AN' CATCH THOSE VARMINTS!
IT'S NO USE, GENE! IT WON'T BUDGE!
ONE O' THESE OLD BARREL HOOPS MIGHT DO IT. IT'S WORTH A TRY.
LOOK! THERE'S A CRACK BETWEEN TH' DOOR AN' TH' WALL. IF WE COULD FIND SOMETHING THIN, WE MIGHT PUSH UP TH' BAR.

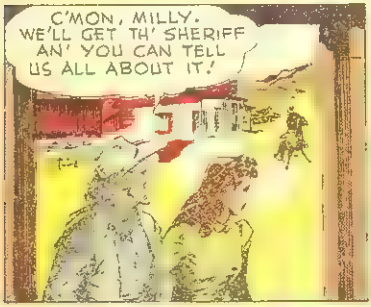
MEANTIME, OUTSIDE THE MINE
SHE'S ALL LOADED, BULL! AUTRY'S HORSE IS ACTIN' MIGHTY SPOOKY. THOUGH.
TH' HORSE'LL BE ALL RIGHT LET'S GET ROLLIN'!
TH' HORSE BROKE LOOSE!
LET 'IM GO! WE AIN'T GOT TIME TO CATCH HIM!
HATE TO LOSE THAT ANIMAL. FINEST PIECE O' HORSEFLESH I EVER SEEN.
... AND IN THE OLD MINE...
HOLD YOUR BREATH, MILLY. I THINK TH' BAR'S MOVIN'!
IT WORKED! WE PUSHED TH BOLT UP! NOW WE GOTTA TAKE A CHANCE ON SHOVIN' AWAY ALL TH' STUFF THEY PILED OUTSIDE! IF THEY'VE GONE WITH TH' GOLD, WE'RE SAFE. IF THEY'RE STILL HERE... WE'RE GONERS!
WE'LL SOON KNOW WHETHER THEY'RE STILL HERE, MILLY!
CRASH!
THAT CURLY, WHOEVER HE IS, MUSTA GOT HERE WITH TH' WAGON, LIKE THEY SAID. 'CAUSE AFTER ALL THAT NOISE, THEY'RE SURELY GONE!
OH, I HOPE THEY LEFT YOUR HORSE, GENE!

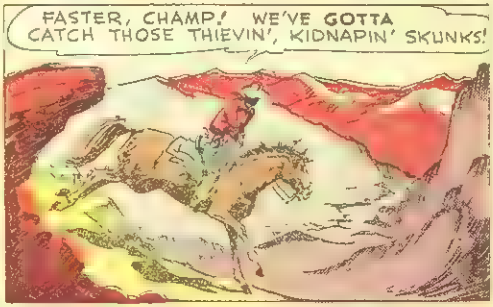

THEY DIDN'T LEAVE HIM BUT HE CAME BACK! GOOD OLD CHAMP!

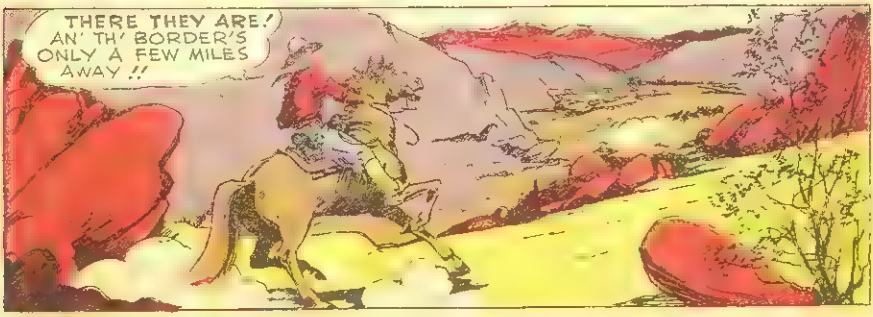

WE'LL HEAD FOR TOWN, THEY SAID THEY WERE GOIN' TO PICK UP BIFF. THEN I'LL GRAB A GUN AN' TRAIL 'EM FROM THERE!

THERE'S IKE, NOW! I'LL DROP YOU OFF AN' GET HIS GUN. YOU EXPLAIN TO IKE AN' TH' SHERIFF AN' TELL THEM TO FOLLOW ME!


THANKS FOR TH' GUN, IKE. I GOTTA MOVE IF I WANT TO CATCH 'EM 'FORE THEY CROSS TH' BORDER. AN' CHAMP IS TH' FASTEST HORSE AROUND HERE!


C'MON, MILLY. WE'LL GET TH' SHERIFF AN' YOU CAN TELL US ALL ABOUT IT!


FASTER, CHAMP! WE'VE GOTTA CATCH THOSE THIEVIN', KIDNAPIN' SKUNKS!


THERE THEY ARE! AN' TH' BORDER'S ONLY A FEW MILES AWAY!!

HERE COMES SOMEBODY! AN' HE'S SURE STRAIN LEATHER!
IT'S AUTRY.. OR I M SS MY GUESS!
AUTRY!! IT CAN'T BE!
IT IS AUTRY! NO OTHER HORSE COULD TRAVEL THAT FAST!
BUT HOW... HOW COULD HE GET OUT?
SOON'S HE'S IN RANGE, SHOOT AN' SHOOT TO KILL! WE GOTTA GET ACROSS TH' BORDER!
ONE OF US'LL GET HIM SURE!
GOTTA PICK OFF THOSE SHARPSHOOTERS IN BACK!
WINGED 'EM BOTH! NOW FOR TH' TWO BIG SKUNKS!!
GET HIM DRAKE! STOP HIM!!

OWWW!! MY HAND!!
GRAB TH' REINS, DRAKE!
IT'S LESS 'N A MILE TO TH' BORDER! WE'LL MAKE IT!
I SURE HOPE MY AIM'S TRUE THIS TIME!
STOP!
WHAT... !!
WHIP, BULL!
OR I'LL FINISH THIS JOB RIGHT!
THAT REAL CONTEST WITH TH' WHIP SO SOON, DID YOU, BULL?
A SHORT TIME LATER.
HERE'S TH' WHOLE KIT AN' CABOODLE O' GOLD THIEVES, HI-JACKERS, AN' KIDNAPERS, SHERIFF! AN' MAYBE MILLY NOLAN'LL FIND REAL GOLD SOME DAY IN HER GHOST MINE!
WHEN YOU CAUGHT THEM RUNAWAYS, GENE!

COWBOY LINGO

Tally Book

EVERY COWMAN CARRIES HIS BOOK-KEEPING SYSTEM WITH HIM. IT IS THE LITTLE "TALLY BOOK" HE KEEPS IN HIS POCKET. AT ROUND-UP TIME HE MAKES A LIST OF THE CALVES BRANDED, AND WHEN HE BUYS OR SELLS HORSES, MAKES A NOTE OF THE NUMBER INVOLVED.

Range Boss

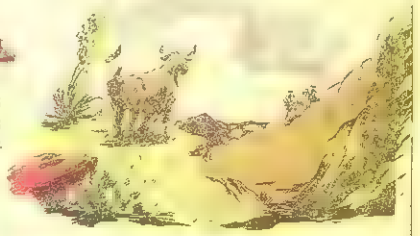
MANY LARGE COW OUTFITS HAVE A "RANGE BOSS" IN ADDITION TO THE FOREMAN. THE RANGE BOSS HAS CHARGE OF ALL WORK OUT ON THE RANGE. HE MUST KNOW THE COUNTRY THOROUGHLY AND HAVE A PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE OF ALL PHASES OF RANCH PROCEDURE.

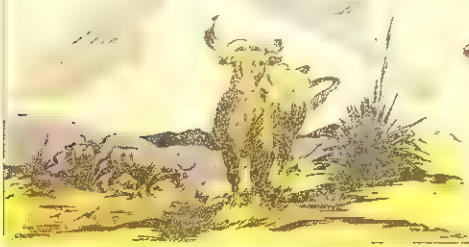
Thirty Years' Gatherin'

THE COWBOY CARRIES ALL OF HIS WORLDLY GOODS ROLLED UP IN HIS BED WHEN HE MOVES FROM ONE OUTFIT TO ANOTHER. HE CALLS IT HIS "THIRTY YEARS' GATHERIN'." IN IT MAY BE FOUND ANYTHING FROM A NEEDLE TO A SIX GUN.

Maverick

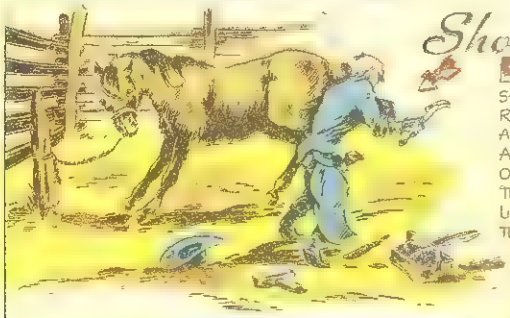
OCCASIONALLY A COW-CRITTER ESCAPES THE ROUND-UP YEAR AFTER YEAR AND IS NEVER BRANDED OR EAR-MARKED. IT IS KNOWN AS A "MAVERICK," AND WHEN RUNNING ON THE OPEN RANGE, IS "ANYBODY'S COW."





Marker

A COW HAVING SOME DISTINGUISHING FEATURE, SUCH AS A CROOKED OR BROKEN HORN, OR SOME UNUSUAL COLORING, IS KNOWN AS A "MARKER." THEY ARE SHUNNED BY RUSTLERS, BEING TOO EASY TO IDENTIFY.

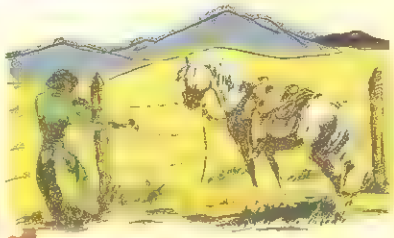


Shoein' Up

EVERY COWBOY MUST KNOW HOW TO SHOE A HORSE. BEFORE THE SPRING ROUND UP STARTS THE EXTRA HORSES ARE RUN IN FROM THE WINTER RANGE AND EACH RIDER IS GIVEN A "STRING" OF HORSES TO USE, USUALLY FROM SIX TO TEN HEAD. THEN THE WORK OF 'SHOEIN' UP' BEGINS. MOST RANGE HORSES OBJECT TO BEING SHOD AND MANY OF THEM MUST BE THROWN AND HOG TIED BEFORE THE SHOES CAN BE NAILED ON.

Fence Rider

MANY OF THE BIG RANCHES ARE NOW UNDER FENCE. THEY EMPLOY "FENCE RIDERS" WHO SPEND MOST OF THEIR TIME KEEPING THE FENCES IN REPAIR. THEY RIDE WITH SADDLE BAGS CONTAINING A HAMMER, FENCE PLIERS, STAPLES AND ANY OTHER NECESSARY TOOLS.



Hooks

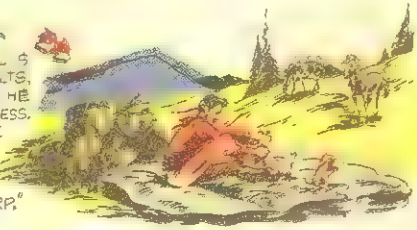
A COWBOY OFTEN CALLS HIS SPURS "HOOKS." A GOOD PAIR OF SPURS COSTS ANYWHERE FROM $7.50 TO $20. THEY ARE USUALLY MADE OF HAND-FORGED STEEL AND FREQUENTLY INLAID OR OVERLAID WITH SILVER AND ENGRAVED.

Line Camp

SOME OF THE LARGE OUTFITS MAINTAIN "LINE CAMPS" IN THE MORE REMOTE SECTIONS OF THE RANCH. TWO COWBOYS USUALLY "HOLD DOWN" A CAMP OF THIS SORT AND HAVE A CERTAIN AREA WHICH THEY MUST WORK. IT IS A LONESOME JOB AND THE BOYS ARE RELIEVED FREQUENTLY.

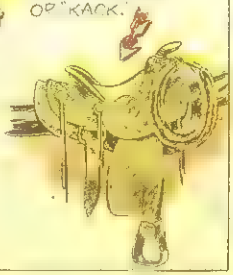
Soogans

THE COWBOY'S BED ROLL IS MADE UP OF SEVERAL QUILTS, CALLED "SOOGANS," WHICH HE USES INSTEAD OF A MATTRESS. OVER THE SOOGANS HE PLACES HIS BLANKETS AND AROUND THE ENTIRE BED IS A CANVAS COVER OR "TARP."



Hull

A GOOD SADDLE IS THE COWBOY'S MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF EQUIPMENT. ONE OFTEN HEARS HIM REFER TO HIS "HULL" OR "KACK."



Bushwhacker

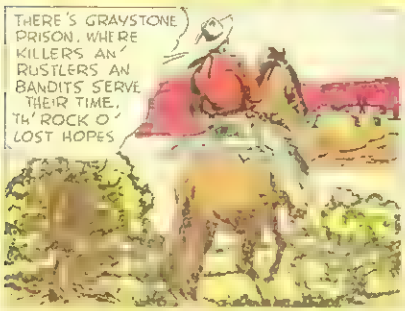
"DRYGULCHER" OR "BUSHWHACKER" IS THE WESTERN TERM FOR A GUN MAN WHO WAITS FOR HIS VICTIM AND SHOOTS HIM DOWN FROM AMBUSH. HE HIRES OUT AS A PAID KILLER AND IS A COUNTERPART OF THE EASTERN GANGSTER OR "ROD-MAN."

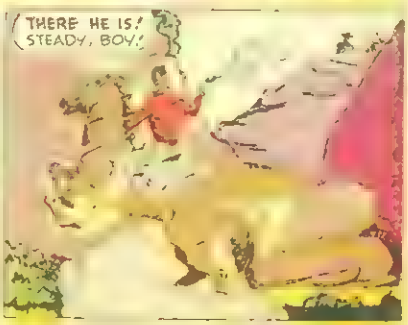
Gene Autry in RENEGADE RANCH

RIDING TOWARD THE LITTLE TOWN OF EAGLE MESA, GENE AUTRY SUDDENLY FINDS HIMSELF IN THE CENTER OF A BLAZING BATTLE BETWEEN RUSTLER-GUNMEN AND EX-CONVICTS FROM DREAD GRAYSTONE PRISON.

HE JOINS FORCES WITH KINDLY ROYAL ROLLINS WHO OFFERS REFUGE TO PERSONS [illegible] RANCH, NICKNAMED RENEGADE RANCH BY HIS ENEMIES.

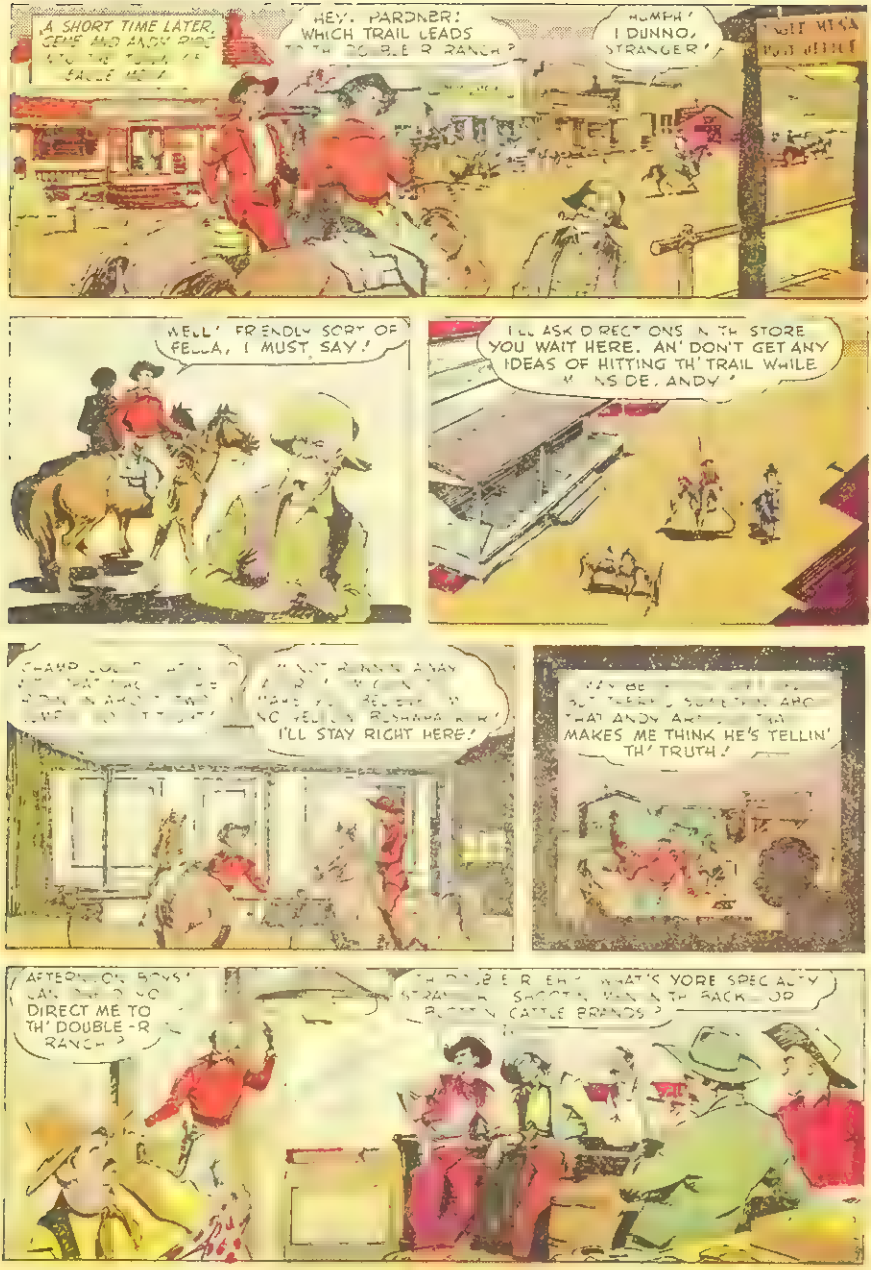
PRETTY CAROL ROLLINS [illegible] ANDY ARNOLD AND RANCHER SAM BANKS ALSO PLAY EXCITING ROLES IN THIS STORY OF RECLAIMED MEN, NIGHT-RIDING KILLERS, AND THE LAW.





GOT HIM!
LET'S GO, CHAMP! I HOPE I ONLY WINGED HIM! I WANT TO KNOW WHY HE TOOK THAT POT SHOT AT ME!
WONDER WHO KNEW I WAS COMIN' THIS WAY TO LEND A HAND TO SHERIFF BROWN AT EAGLE MESA?
IN CASE YOU'RE TRYIN' ANY TRICKS, FELLA, I'M WARNIN' YOU ... I'VE GOT YOU COVERED!
IT'S NO FAKE! HE'S OUT COLD! BUT NOT HURT BAD. I MUSTA JUST GRAZED HIS SKULL WITH THAT SNAP SHOT.
NEVER SAW THIS HOMBRE BEFORE! WHY D'YA SUPPOSE HE TRIED TO AMBUSH ME? SAY?... MAYBE.....
PALE FACE! CROPPED HAIR! AN STORE-CLOTHES... YESS R... I'LL BET YOU'RE AN EX-CON FROM GRAYSTONE PRISON!
YOU GUESSED RIGHT, STRANGER. I AM AN EX-CON JUST LET OUT THIS MORNING.
WHY DID YOU TAKE THAT SHOT AT ME? BETTER TALK FAST, FELLA!"

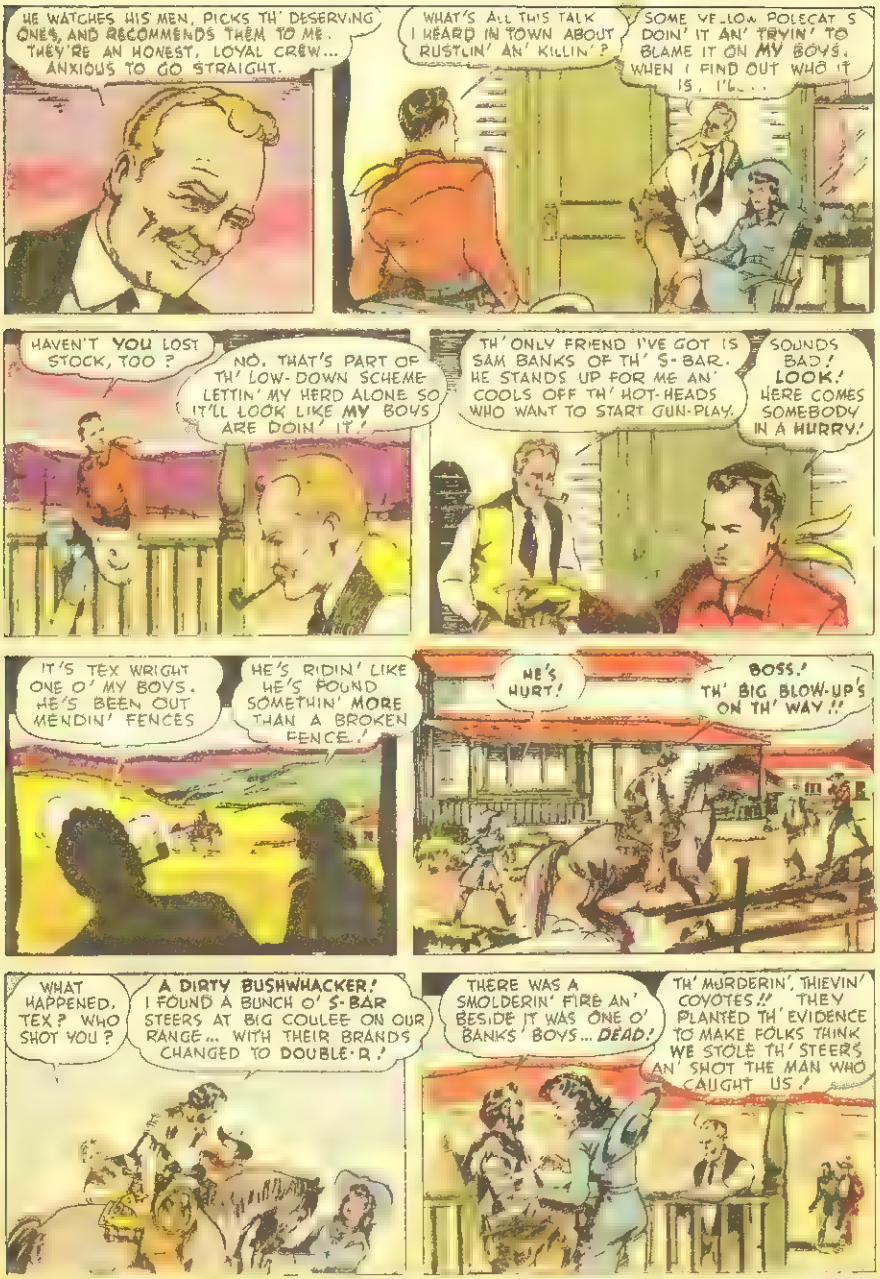
SO YOU'RE THE HOMBRE THAT WAS RIDIN' DOWN BELOW! I DIDN'T SHOOT AT YOU!! A MASKED MAN ROPED ME FROM THESE SAME ROCKS THIS MORNIN' WHEN I WAS RIDIN' THROUGH...
HE TED ME, TOOK THAT SHOT AT YOU, AN' THEN PUSHED ME UP WHERE YOU'D SEE ME AN' PLUG ME NSTEAD O' HIM.
I DIDN'T SEE ANY ROPES ON YOU WHEN I RODE UP.. NOR ANY SIGN O' ANY-ONE ELSE AROUND HERE!
WHEN I FELL HE MUSTA CUT THE ROPES QUICK AN HIT THAT TRAIL. HIS HORSE WAS TIED BACK THERE. I'M TELLIN' THE TRUTH, SO HELP ME!
SOUNDS ALMOST CRAZY ENOUGH TO BE TRUE. WHO ARE YOU AN' WHERE YOU HEADIN'?
MY NAME'S ANDY ARNOLD. I WAS HEADIN' FOR THE DOUBLE-R RANCH NEAR EAGLE MESA... GOT TH PROMISE OF A JOB AN TH WARDEN LOANED ME A HORSE TO GET THERE
OKAY, ANDY. I'LL RIDE WITH YOU... BUT DON'T TRY ANY TR.CKS
MY NAME'S GENE AUTRY
HIS HORSE WAS TIED HERE BESIDE MINE.. HIS WHOLE FACE WAS MASKED SO I'D NEVER RECOGNIZE HIM IF I SAW HIM AGAIN
YOU'VE SURE GOT EVERY ANGLE COVERED, ANDY. THESE ROCKS WOULDN'T SHOW TRACKS IF A DOZEN HORSES HAD BEEN TIED
YOU MUST HAVE A GOOD FRIEND AT TH' DOUBLE-R TO OFFER YOU A JOB..... RIGHT OUT O' PR.SON.
NOPE, NEVER MET ANYBODY FROM TH' RANCH — A MAN NAMED ROLLINS OWNS TH' SPREAD AND ALL HIS HANDS ARE EX-CONS FROM GRAYSTONE.
WHEN MY TIME WAS UP THE WARDEN TOLD ME MY GOOD BEHAVIOR HAD EARNED ME THIS CHANCE TO GO STRAIGHT, SO I TOOK IT.
THIS ROLLINS MUST BE E THER GOOD HEARTED OR... WHAT WERE YOU SENT UP FOR, ANDY?
CATTLE RUSTLIN'! I WAS PUNCHIN' COWS DOWN SOUTH... GOT MIXED UP WITH THE WRONG CROWD... THOUGHT I COULD MAKE A LITTLE EASY MONEY
I HOPE YOU'RE TALK'N STRAIGHT, ANDY.


A SHORT TIME LATER, GENE AND ANDY RIDE INTO THE TOWN OF EAGLE ROCK.
HEY, PARDNER! WHICH TRAIL LEADS TO TH' DOUBLE R RANCH?
HUMPH! I DUNNO, STRANGER!
WELL! FRIENDLY SORT OF FELLA, I MUST SAY!
I'LL ASK DIRECTIONS AT TH' STORE. YOU WAIT HERE. AN' DON'T GET ANY IDEAS OF HITTING TH' TRAIL WHILE I'M INSIDE, ANDY!
I'LL STAY RIGHT HERE!
MAKES ME THINK HE'S TELLIN' TH' TRUTH!
AFTERNOON BOYS! CAN YOU DIRECT ME TO TH' DOUBLE-R RANCH?
WHAT'S YORE SPECIALTY SHOOTIN' MEN AT TH' BACK OR BURNIN' CATTLE BRANDS?

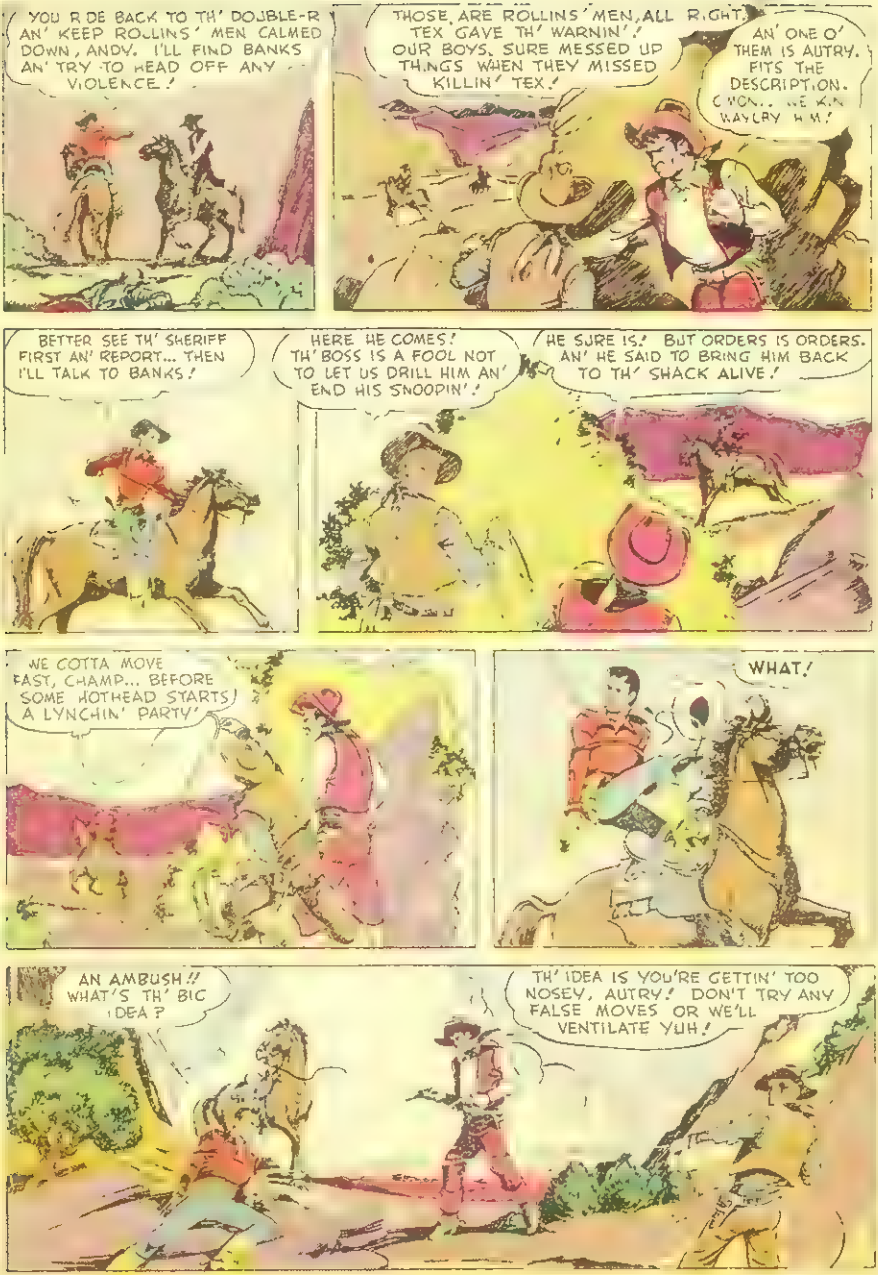
NOBODY CALLS ME A KILLER OR A BRAND BLOTTER!
STAND BACK, BOYS!
JUST A MINUTE, STRANGER! PERHAPS I CAN EXPLAIN
YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE TH' BOYS' HOT HEADEDNESS, PARTNER. THEY BEEN LOSIN' CATTLE TO A PACK O' NIGHT-RIDERS AN' THEY BLAME TH' ROLLINS BOYS. TH' DOUBLE-R CAIN'
WE KNOW THEY'RE DOIN IT. DOUBLE-R DON'T STAND FER ROYAL ROLLINS. IT'S FER RENEGADE RANCH!
YOU SEE, ROLLINS HAS GOT A BIG-HEARTED SCHEME O' HIS N' EX CONS FROM CRAYSTONE PRISON... SAYS HE'S GIVIN' EM A CHANCE TO GO STRAIGHT. ALL HIS HANDS ARE KILLERS OR ROAD AGENTS OR RUSTLERS!
M' SAM BANKS! MY RANCH IS THE S BAR, RIGHT NEXT TO THE DOUBLE R. BEEN LOSING CATTLE TOO - BUT I DON'T BELIEVE ROLLINS AN' HIS BOYS ARE BEHIND IT.
HOW MUCH YOU'LL TELL ME HOW TO GET THERE
SURE. MAKE A BEE-LINE TWO OR THREE MILES AN YOU'LL RUN ACROSS THE DOUBLE R SPREAD
THANKS BANKS AN' SO, CAN TELL YOUR FRIENDS THAT I'M NOT A JAIL-BIRD NOR A GUN-SLINGER!
WELL, I SEE YOU'RE STILL HERE, ANDY
YEP! AN' I BEEN USIN' MY EYES... C'MERE AN SEE WHAT I DISCOVERED
LOOK HOW LATHERED THAT HORSE IS! THAT PONY'S BEEN RUN HARD RECENTLY! AN' THAT RIFLE SCABBARD'S EMPTY!
YOU MEAN YOU THINK TH' RIFLE THAT BELONGS THERE IS TH' ONE TH' MASKED MAN SHOT AT ME AN' THEN PLANTED? MMM

TH' S-BAR BRAND! AN' THE ONLY S-BAR MAN IN TH' STORE IS TH' OWNER --- SAM BANKS!
MAYBE YOU'VE DISCOVERED SOMETHING, ANDY. LET'S KEEP MUM ABOUT IT AN' SEE WHAT DEVELOPS.
OKAY! BUT SOME DAY I'LL GET MY HANDS ON THE RAT THAT TRIED TO FRAME ME AS A BUSHWHACKER --- AN' WHEN I DO..
WE -- BE BULL-DOGGED! THERE'S OL' DAN BROWN!
LOOKS LIKE HE'S THE SHERIFF!
GENE AUTRY!
SIT TIGHT A MINUTE ANDY WANT TO SAY HELLO TO DAN--
EAGLE MESA SHERIFF'S OFFICE
YOU'RE NOT GOIN TO TURN ME IN, ARE YOU?
BEEN WAITIN' FOR YOU, GENE. SURE GLAD YOU'RE HERE. THINGS ARE IN A BAD MESS.
I'M KEEPIN' MUM ABOUT YOUR SENDIN' FOR ME, DAN. WANT TO DO A LITTLE INVESTIGATIN'. THINK I'M ON TH' TRAIL O' SOMETHING MIGHTY INTERESTIN'.
I'M HEADIN' FOR ROLLINS RANCH NOW. I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHAT I FIND OUT SOON'S I CAN.
S'LONG, GENE MIGHTY NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
BE BACK LATER, DAN!
SURE WAS WHITE OF YOU NOT TO TURN ME OVER TO TH' SHERIFF, AUTRY!
I'M GIVIN' YOU TH' BENEFIT O' TH' DOUBT, ANDY... NOW WE'LL SEE HOW YOUR STORY CHECKS AT TH' ROLLINS' SPREAD.
I TOLD YOU THE TRUTH... SO HELP ME!

AN HOUR LATER
HERE WE ARE, ANDY. YOUR NEW OUTFIT.
I WON'T FORGET WHAT YOU'VE DONE, AUTRY.
JUST STAY ON TH' STRAIGHT PATH... THAT'LL BE THANKS ENOUGH.
HOWDY, BOYS. I CLIMB DOWN AN' REST YORE BONES.
DOES ONE O' YOU HAPPEN TO BE ANDY ARNOLD?
THIS IS ANDY, MISTER ROLLINS... I'M GENE AUTRY. I'M JUST RIDIN' THROUGH AN' I WILL ACCEPT YOUR OFFER TO REST
AUTRY AND ANDY, THIS IS MY DAUGHTER, CAROL, AND MY FOREMAN, TOM TRACE.
GLAD TO MEET YOU.
C'MON, ANDY, I'LL SHOW YOU WHERE TO BUNK AN' HANG YOUR GEAR.
ANDY LOOKS LIKE A PROMISIN' YOUNG MAN. I SURE CAN USE ANOTHER HAND
HAD SOME TROUBLE FINDIN' YOUR PLACE, ROLLINS... TH' TOWNFOLKS DON'T ACT VERY FRIENDLY.
I KNOW. THEY TREAT MY BOYS LIKE LEPERS! JUST BECAUSE THEY MADE MISTAKES ONCE.
HOW'D YOU HAPPEN TO START RUNNIN' EX CONVICTS ROLLINS?
BECAUSE I'M ONE... MYSELF! WARDEN LEWIS AT GRAYSTONE STRAIGHTENED ME OUT AN' WE CAME TO BE FRIENDS.


HE WATCHES HIS MEN, PICKS TH' DESERVING ONES, AND RECOMMENDS THEM TO ME. THEY'RE AN HONEST, LOYAL CREW... ANXIOUS TO GO STRAIGHT.
WHAT'S ALL THIS TALK I HEARD IN TOWN ABOUT RUSTLIN' AN' KILLIN'?
SOME YELLOW POLECAT'S DOIN' IT AN' TRYIN' TO BLAME IT ON MY BOYS. WHEN I FIND OUT WHO IT IS, I'L...
HAVEN'T YOU LOST STOCK, TOO?
NO. THAT'S PART OF TH' LOW-DOWN SCHEME LETTIN' MY HERD ALONE SO IT'LL LOOK LIKE MY BOYS ARE DOIN' IT.
TH' ONLY FRIEND I'VE GOT IS SAM BANKS OF TH' S-BAR. HE STANDS UP FOR ME AN' COOLS OFF TH' HOT-HEADS WHO WANT TO START GUN-PLAY.
SOUNDS BAD! LOOK! HERE COMES SOMEBODY IN A HURRY!
IT'S TEX WRIGHT ONE O' MY BOYS. HE'S BEEN OUT MENDIN' FENCES
HE'S RIDIN' LIKE HE'S POUND SOMETHIN' MORE THAN A BROKEN FENCE.!
HE'S HURT!
BOSS.! TH' BIG BLOW-UP'S ON TH' WAY!!
WHAT HAPPENED, TEX? WHO SHOT YOU?
A DIRTY BUSHWHACKER! I FOUND A BUNCH O' S-BAR STEERS AT BIG COULEE ON OUR RANGE... WITH THEIR BRANDS CHANGED TO DOUBLE-R.!
THERE WAS A SMOLDERIN' FIRE AN' BESIDE IT WAS ONE O' BANKS' BOYS... DEAD!
TH' MURDERIN', THIEVIN' COYOTES!! THEY PLANTED TH' EVIDENCE TO MAKE FOLKS THINK WE STOLE TH' STEERS AN' SHOT THE MAN WHO CAUGHT US.!

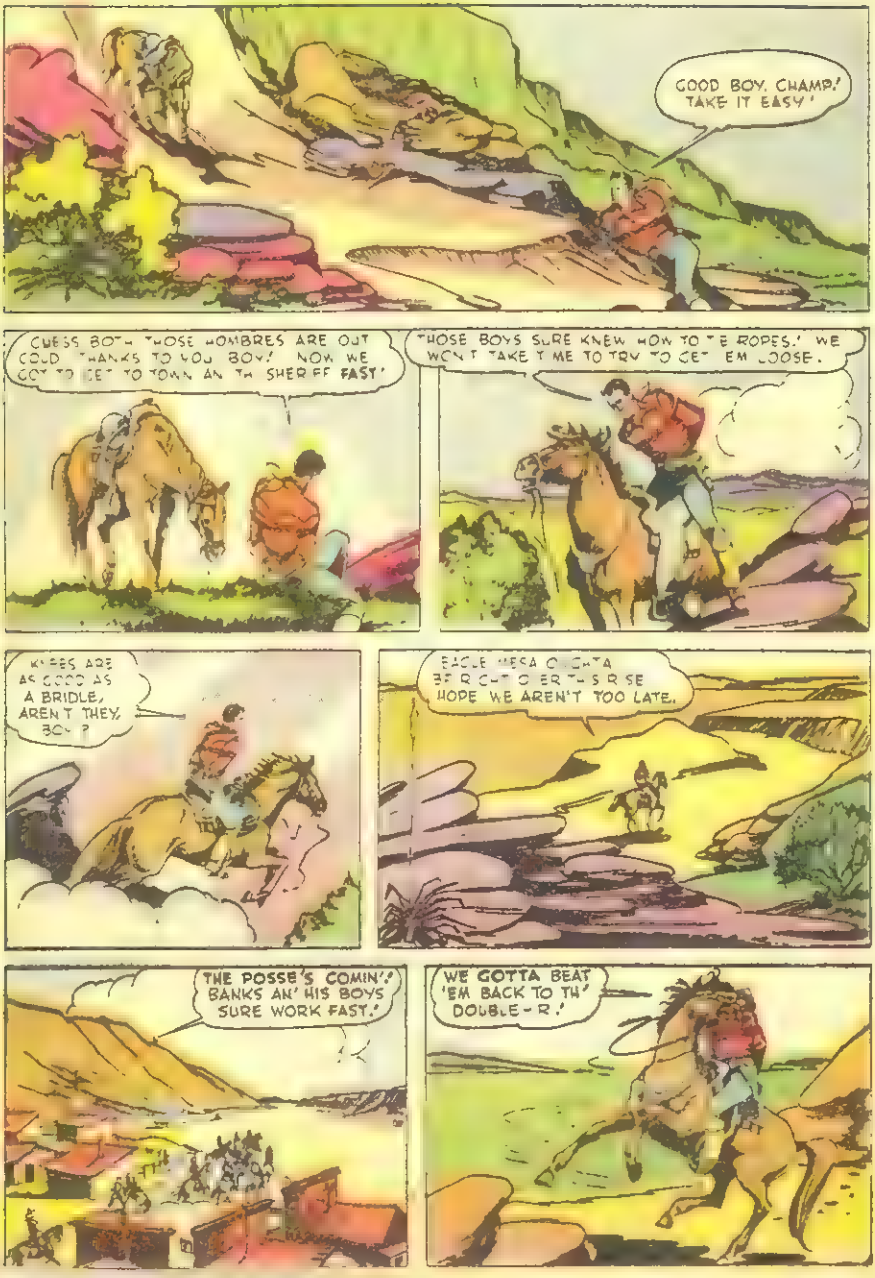
MEANT TO LOOK LIKE WE FOUGHT IT OUT.....
CATCH US RED-HANDED! THIS MEANS TROUBLE... REAL TROUBLE!
POINTIN' TO TH' REAL CRIMINAL!!
ET ME GO A TH YOU AUTRY!
C'MON, THEN, ANDY! LET'S GET MOVIN'!!
MIGHTY FINE O' YOU TO LEND A HAND,
THINK WE CAN FIND B.G COULEE, AU
SURE. TEX GAVE US STRAIGHT DIRECTIONS.
THERE'S TH' SPOT! JUST LIKE TEX DESCRIBED IT!
YEP! KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED FOR TROUBLE, ANDY! THAT BUSHWHACKER MAY STILL BE AROUND!
BANKS' MAN AN' BANKS' CATTLE!"
FROM TH LOOKS O' THINGS, SOMEBODY'S SURE TRYIN TO GET BANKS
MAD AT ROLLINS'
SHOT CLEAN THROUGH TH HEART, POOR FELLA! NO SIGNS OF ANYTHING ELSE 'ROUND HERE, AUTRY!
THESE BRANDS 'VE JUST BEEN CHANGED! WHEN BANKS AN' TH' OTHER RANCHERS SEE THIS, IT'LL SURE BE BAD FOR ROLLINS AN' HIS BOYS!


YOU R DE BACK TO TH' DOJBLE-R AN' KEEP ROLLINS' MEN CALMED DOWN, ANDY. I'LL FIND BANKS AN' TRY TO HEAD OFF ANY VIOLENCE!
THOSE ARE ROLLINS' MEN, ALL RIGHT. TEX GAVE TH' WARNIN'! OUR BOYS, SURE MESSED UP THINGS WHEN THEY MISSED KILLIN' TEX!
AN' ONE O' THEM IS AUTRY. FITS THE DESCRIPTION. C'MON.. WE K.N WAYLAY H.M!
BETTER SEE TH' SHERIFF FIRST AN' REPORT... THEN I'LL TALK TO BANKS!
HERE HE COMES! TH' BOSS IS A FOOL NOT TO LET US DRILL HIM AN' END HIS SNOOPIN'!
HE SURE IS! BUT ORDERS IS ORDERS. AN' HE SAID TO BRING HIM BACK TO TH' SHACK ALIVE!
WE COTTA MOVE FAST, CHAMP... BEFORE SOME HOTHEAD STARTS A LYNCHIN' PARTY!
WHAT!
AN AMBUSH!! WHAT'S TH' BIG IDEA?
TH' IDEA IS YOU'RE GETTIN' TOO NOSEY, AUTRY! DON'T TRY ANY FALSE MOVES OR WE'LL VENTILATE YUH!

S-BAR HORSES!! THEN BANKS..HIMSELF..IS MIXED UP IN THIS GAME !!
QUIT TALKIN' !! WHITEY, HELP HIM ONTO HIS HORSE !
I'LL RIDE ALONG AN SEE WHAT HAPPENS. IF BANKS IS BEHIND IT S...
WELL! WELL!! SO MY TRAP CAUGHT SOMETHING, AFTER ALL ! FIGGERED WHEN TEX GOT BACK TO RENEGADE RANCH YOU'D COME STICK'N' YOUR NOSE INTO THINGS, AUTRY!
BANKS!! SO YOUR FRIENDSHIP FOR ROLLINS WAS JUST A FRONT TO HIDE YOUR REAL GAME!
SURE! AN' I WORKED TOO! MY BOYS ARE ALREADY IN TOWN, REPORTIN' TH' STOLEN CATTLE AN' TH' MURDER OF MY MAN! EVERYBODY'LL JOIN TH' POSSE WE'LL RIDE OUT ROLLINS AN' HIS RENEGADES FOR GOOD!
WHO DID THAT POOR HOMBRE WHO WAS FOUND THERE BY TH' BRANDON FORK?
ONE O' MY BOYS.. AIN'T RIGHT SURE WHICH ONE! HE HAD IT COMIN' TO HIM. HE WAS TURNIN' YELLOW AN' THREATENIN' TO SPILL TH' BEANS TO TH' SHERIFF!
YOU'RE TH' SKUNK WHO AMBUSHED ME NEAR GRAYSTONE AN' FRAMED ANDY ARNOLD FOR IT, AREN'T YOU?
YEP TH' SHERIFF TOLD ME HE'D SENT FOR YOU TO HELP CLEAN HOUSE AROUND HERE... SAID YOU WERE TH' FASTEST-SHOOTIN', SMARTEST HOMBRE IN TH' STATE ...
I'D HEARD ABOUT YOU BEFORE AN' I'D SEEN YOU ONCE SO I DECIDED TO STOP YOU. THAT FELLA, ANDY, JUST HAPPENED ALONG

WHAT'S TH' IDEA OF TELLIN' ME ALL THIS? WHY DON'T YOU HAVE YOUR GUNMEN BUSHWHACK ME AN' END IT?
BECAUSE I WANTED TO SHOW YOU THAT YOU'VE RUN INTO SOMEBODY THAT'S SMARTER AN' QUICKER ON TH' TRIGGER THAN YOU!
C'MON 'ROUND HERE, AUTRY. I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING ELSE.. WHILE YOU STILL CAN SEE!
SO THAT'S WHERE YOU'D ALL TH' CATTLE YOUR MEN RUSTLED!
YEP! THIS LITTLE VALLEY OPENS INTO BIG COULEE AT ONE END AN' INTO OPEN COUNTRY AT TH' OTHER. WHILE TH' POSSE'S HANGIN' ROLLINS AN' HIS JAILBIRDS, MY BOYS'LL DRIVE TH' CATTLE OUT TH' FAR END
...ET AWAY WITH A FORTUNE AN ROLLINS'LL GET TH' BLAME! ...HOMEMADE RANCH CROWD DEAD WE CAN STAY HERE IN SAFETY AN' ...RANCHIN'!
YOU'VE GOT A BUM REPUTATION FOR BEIN' SMART AUTRY, BUT I'VE OUTSMARTED TH' WHOLE COUNTY SHERIFF ROLLINS AN' TH' SHERIFF!" AN' NOW I'VE EVEN OUTSMARTED YOU!
...SHOWS HOW SMART YOU ARE, WHAT HAPPENS TO ME?
...THOUGHT YOU'D GUESSED THAT! TH' BOYS'LL FILL YUH FULL O' SLUGS AN' DUMP YOU ON ROLLINS' LAND SO'S IT'LL LOOK LIKE HE DONE IT TO GET YOU OUTA TH' WAY!
GET TOGETHER QUICK BOYS! WE'LL HURRY TO TOWN AN' START TH' POSSE MOVIN' TOWARD TH' DOUBLE-R. TH' SHERIFF'S OUTA TOWN SO HE CAN'T STOP US!

DOES BANKS ALWAYS TALK THAT MUCH ?
NOPE ! BUT HE KNOWS HE'S SAFE THIS TIME!
MAYBE HE'S NOT SO SAFE..
DRILL HIM!
SHOOT TH' HORSE, JIM!
YOU GOT ME, YOU FOOL!
GIT BACK, YOU FOUR-LEGGED DEVIL !!
OHHHH!

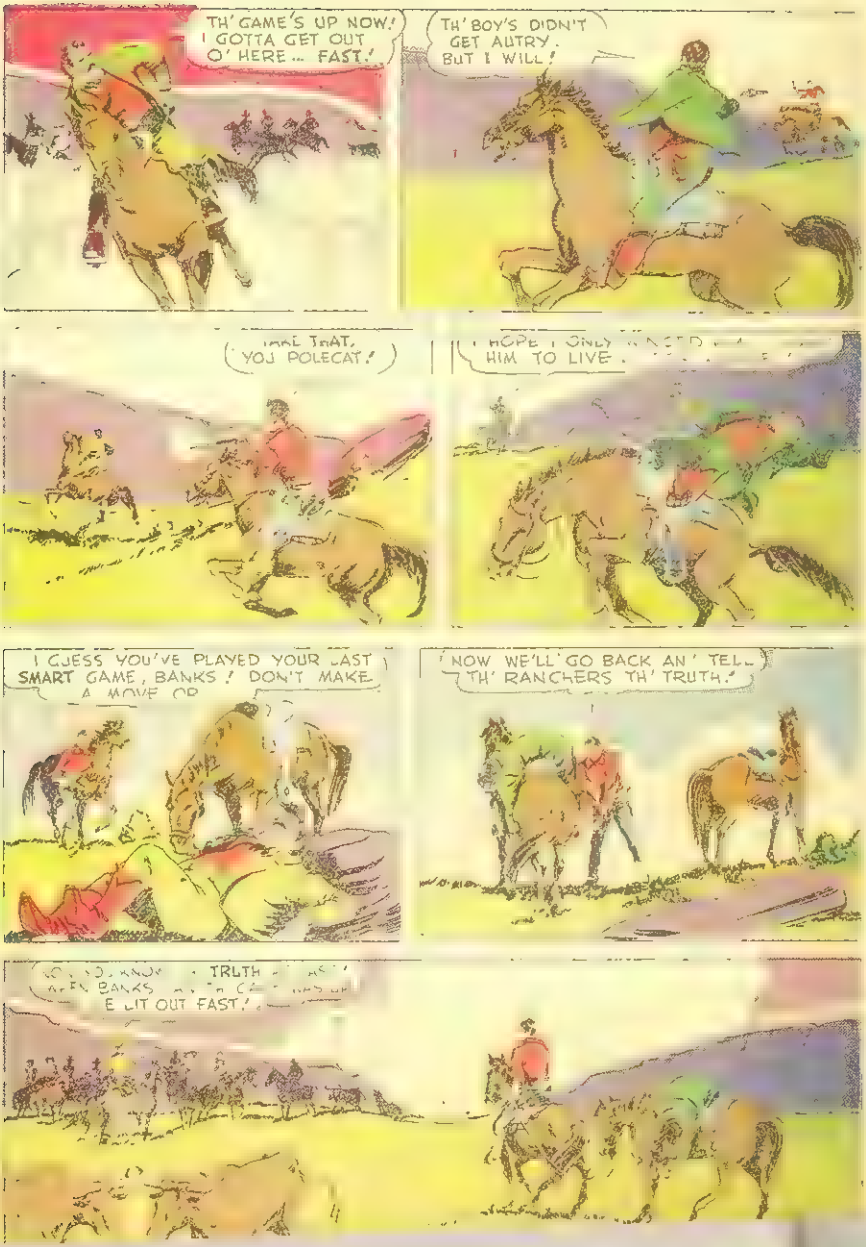

GOOD BOY, CHAMP! TAKE IT EASY!
GUESS BOTH THOSE HOMBRES ARE OUT COLD. THANKS TO YOU BOY! NOW WE GOT TO GET TO TOWN AN TH SHERIFF FAST!
THOSE BOYS SURE KNEW HOW TO TIE ROPES. WE WON'T TAKE TIME TO TRY TO GET 'EM LOOSE.
KNEES ARE AS GOOD AS A BRIDLE, AREN'T THEY, BOY?
EAGLE MESA O GOTTA BE R OUT O ER TH S R SE HOPE WE AREN'T TOO LATE.
THE POSSE'S COMIN'! BANKS AN' HIS BOYS SURE WORK FAST.
WE GOTTA BEAT 'EM BACK TO TH' DOUBLE-R!

MEANWHILE AT THE DOUBLE-R.
WE CAN'T HOLD 'EM LONGER FER AUTRY! WE GOTTA GET THOSE STEERS AT BIG COULEE! SOMEBODY ELSE ENDS 'EM WE'LL NEVER CLEAR OURSELVES!
I'LL GET THE BEST O' TH' BOYS.
MAYBE AUTRY AND SAM BANKS DON'T COOL 'EM DOWN! MAYBE THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY NOW.
IT'S AUTRY!
WHAT'S HAPPENED?
CUT THESE ROPES, QUICK! I'VE GOT A LOT TO TELL YOU!
... AN' BANKS IS BEHIND TH' WHOLE DEAL! AN' HIS MOB'S ON TH' WAY! THEY OUTNUMBER US FIVE TO ONE!!
BANKS!?!! IT CAN'T BE!!
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO! ANDY, TOM, AN' I'LL RIDE DOWN TO TH' END OF TH' VALLEY AN' START TH' CATTLE THIS WAY! SOMEBODY LEND ME A GUN!
C'MON, BOYS! MAYBE WE CAN BEAT THAT MOB YET!

THERE'S A SHORT CUT, LEADING DOWN INTO TH' VALLEY CLOSE TO TH' FAR END.
TH' VALLEY'S STRAIGHT AHEAD THROUGH THIS OPENIN'.
HERE WE ARE! NOW WE'VE GOTTA BLOCK THIS OPEN END AN' DRIVE 'EM OUT TOWARD BIG COULEE. MOVE FAST, BOYS!
READY, BOYS! FIRE!!
THEY'RE MOVIN' FAST! BUT THEY GOTTA MOVE FASTER!
NO USE TRYIN' TO MOVE TH' STEERS NOW! I HEAR TH' MOB COMIN'! GET READY, BOYS!
THERE THEY ARE! TRYIN' TO MOVE TH' STOLEN CATTLE BEFORE YOU SEE 'EM!
FASTER! WE'LL STRING UP TH' WHOLE GANG!

STEADY, BOYS! DON'T FIRE TH' FIRST SHOT! WE GOTTA HOLD 'EM AS LONG AS WE CAN!
HOLD YOUR FIRE, BOYS, TILL I GIVE TH' SIGNAL !!
WE'VE CAUGHT YOU RED-HANDED THIS TIME, ROLLINS... YOU'N' YOUR RENEGADE RANCH EX-CONS! THROW DOWN YOUR GUNS OR ....
WE'RE NOT GIVIN' IN TO ANY MOB, SAM BANKS .. YOU THIEVIN', YELLOW COYOTE!!
IF YOU BOYS'LL LISTEN TO ME, I CAN...
WE AIN'T LISTENING TO ANYTHING!! WE'RE GIVIN' YOU AN' YOUR JAILBIRDS ONE MORE CHANCE TO SURRENDER PEACEABLY...
AT THAT MOMENT, GENE DRIVES THE STAMPEDING CATTLE OUT OF THE VALLEY INTO BIG COULEE.
THERE THEY ARE! IN A MINUTE THEY'LL START SCOOTIN'! THERE'S ONE CHANCE O' STOPPIN' TH' SLAUGHTER .....

I CAN'T MISS THIS TIME!
EEYOW! AMBUSH!!
RIDE FOR YOUR LIVES! IT'S A STAMPEDE!
IT'S AUTRY!
THERE ARE YOUR STEERS, MEN! STOLEN AN' BRANDED BY SAM BANKS! NOW MAYBE YOU'LL LISTEN TO WHAT I'VE GOT TO SAY!
AUTRY! ALIVE!!


TH' GAME'S UP NOW! I GOTTA GET OUT O' HERE ... FAST!
TH' BOY'S DIDN'T GET AUTRY. BUT I WILL!
TAKE THAT, YOU POLECAT!
I HOPE I ONLY WINGED HIM TO LIVE.
I GUESS YOU'VE PLAYED YOUR LAST SMART GAME, BANKS! DON'T MAKE A MOVE OR
NOW WE'LL GO BACK AN' TELL TH' RANCHERS TH' TRUTH!
E LIT OUT FAST!

BUT I BROUGHT HIM BACK!
LET'S STRING HIM UP! HIM AN' HIS GANG!!
YEAH! FIND TH' NEAREST TREE!
NO MORE LYNCHINGS! WE'LL TURN HIM OVER TO TH' SHERIFF!
YEP! WE'VE GOT TO GET BUSY AN' ROUND UP HIS BOYS! THEY'VE ALL VAMOOSED!
HM! TH' BOYS'LL SOON CORRAL HIS MEN AN WE'LL HAVE THE WHOLE GANG OUTA TH' WAY FOR GOOD!
SURE CATY WHITE OF YOU TO HELP OUT THIS WAY, AUTRY!
MIGHT AS WELL TELL YOU TH' WHOLE STORY NOW, ROLLINS. TH' SHERIFF'S AN OLD PAL O' MINE! HE WROTE ME ABOUT TH' TROUBLE DOWN HERE AN' ASKED ME TO COME DOWN AN' SEE WHAT I COULD FIND OUT!
TH' SHERIFF SORTA SUSPECTED YOUR BOYS. BANKS WAS PLENTY SMART ABOUT PLANTIN' EVIDENCE. BUT DAN WASN'T SURE AN' THAT A STRANGER LIKE ME MIGHT BE ABLE TO NOSE OUT TH' TRUTH.
I GOT HERE AS FAST AS I COULD. SOMEBODY FAKED A MESSAGE ABOUT A KILLIN' TO GET ME OUTA TOWN.
MORE O' BANKS' DIRTY WORK. BUT AUTRY WAS A GOOD SUBSTITUTE FOR YOU, SHERIFF. IT'S SURE LUCKY YOU SENT FOR HIM. YOUR PRISONER'S READY AN' WAITIN'!
THEY WON'T CALL YOUR OUTFIT RENEGADE RANCH NOW, ROLLINS!
NO! THANKS TO YOU, AUTRY!!

Gene Autry in The BANDIT OF DUST DEVIL GAP

THROUGH THE BLEAK, DESOLATE, WIND-SWEPT PASS, KNOWN AS DUST DEVIL GAP, *GENE AUTRY* RIDES TO INVESTIGATE A SERIES OF MYSTERIOUS TRAIN ROBBERIES, COMMITTED BY AN ELUSIVE BANDIT WHO VANISHES INTO THE DUST-FILLED AIR.

WITH GENE IS ANTON BURKE, A RAILROAD OFFICIAL, WHO HAS CALLED FOR HIS HELP IN TRACKING DOWN THE PHANTOM ROBBER.

SO THIS IS THE FAMOUS DUST DEVIL GAP WHERE THE HOLD-UPS TAKE PLACE. DOES TH' WIND BLOW LIKE THIS **ALL** TH' TIME, MISTER BURKE?

YES.' MENTY FOUR HOURS A DAY, GENE. THE BANDIT USUALLY DROPS OFF HERE BECAUSE THE TRAIN SLOWS DOWN FOR THAT STEEP GRADE.

HE SHOWS UP ON THE NIGHT TRAIN AT A SPOT ABOUT FIVE MILES DOWN THE LINE.. ROBS THE PASSENGERS AND THEN DISAPPEARS!'

BUT CAN'T TH' TRAIN CREW OR GUARDS TRAIL HIM?

IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO FOLLOW HIS TRACKS IN THE DAYTIME. AT NIGHT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE.' THE STRONG WIND QUICKLY ERASES HIS TRAIL. LOOK BACK THERE. SEE HOW OUR OWN TRACKS ARE ALREADY BEING WIPED OUT.'

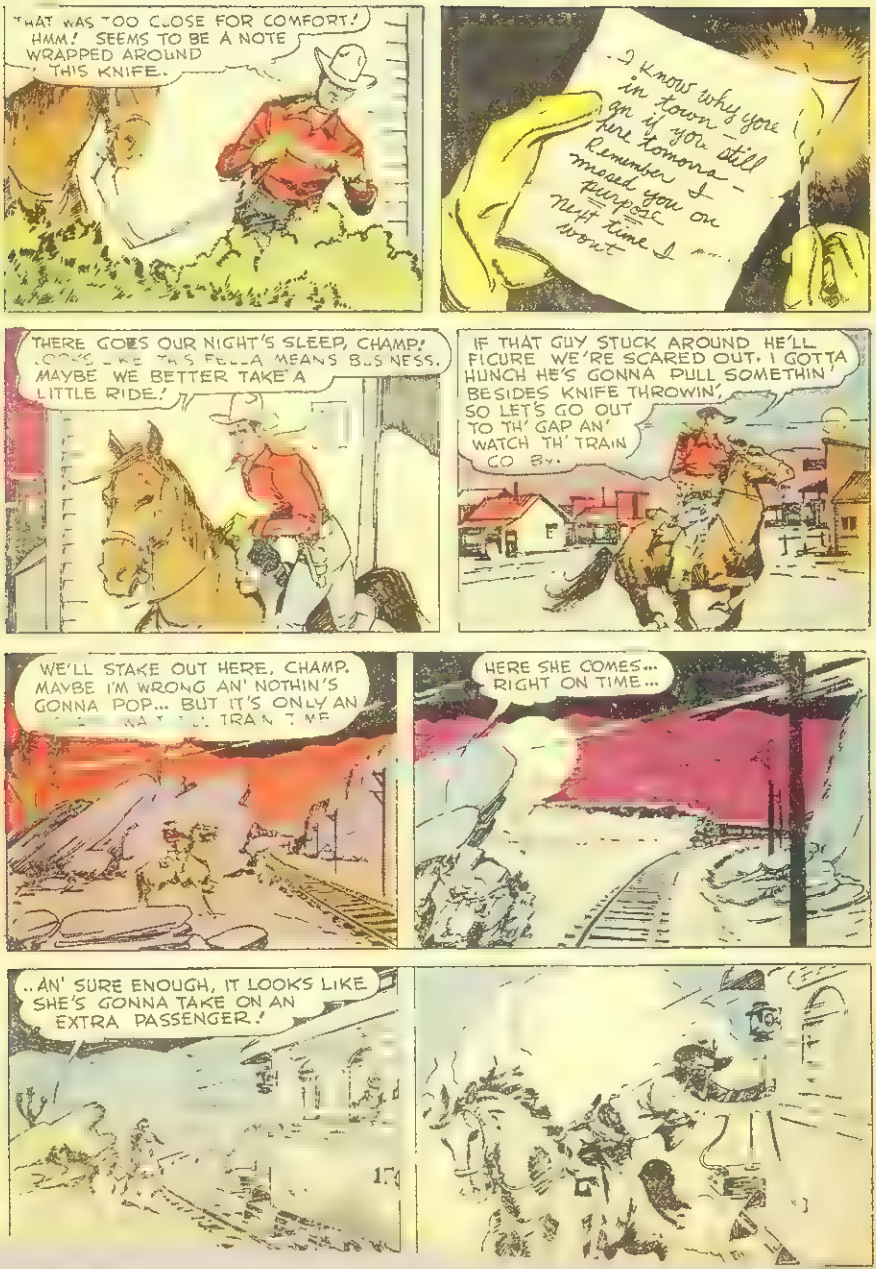
I'LL APPRECIATE YOUR HELP, GENE, BUT I WARN YOU THAT THIS BANDIT'S MIGHTY CLEVER. HE'S GOT POOR OLD PAPPY HICKS, THE SHERIFF, COMPLETELY STUMPED.'

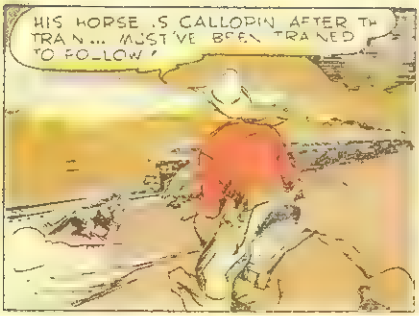
WHEN WE GET BACK TO TOWN I'LL TALK TO YOUR SHERIFF. MAYBE WE CAN FIGGER OUT A WAY TO TRAP YOUR NIGHT-RIDIN' FRIEND.'

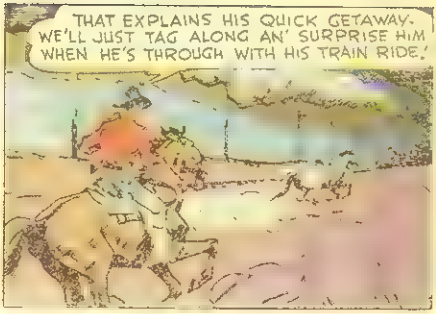
EASY, THERE, CHAMP.' WHAT'S BITIN' YOU?

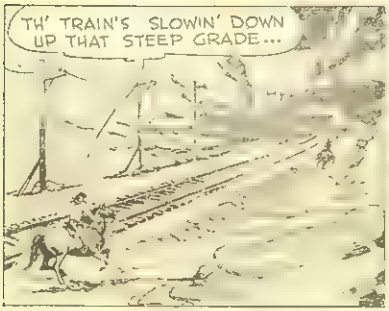
SOME POOR HOMBRE'S COME TO TH END O' H.S TRAIL.'
I'M NOT SURPR'SED. TH.S GAP S DANGEROUS FOR A MAN AFOOT.. THERE'S NO WATER FOR MILES AND YOU CAN EASILY LOSE YOUR WAY IN THESE DUST SWIRLS.'
HE WASN'T AFOOT 'CAUSE HE'S WEARIN SPURS... AN' TH' GAP D DON'T KILL H.M... UNLESS TH WINDS BEEN BLOWIN KNIVES AROUND' HE'S BEEN STABBED IN TH'BACK.'
I WONDER WHO HE WAS. HE SAY'T CARRYING ANY PAPERS OR ANYTHING TO IDENTIFY H.M.
HOW CAN YOU SEE THAT?
JUDGIN' BY THESE PIN-HOLES IN HIS VEST HE WAS WEARIN' A BADGE... PROB'LY A LAW-MAN. HIS GUN'S BEEN TAKEN, TOO, BUT I SEE HE WAS A HANDY MAN WITH IT.
SEE THESE HEAVY CALLOUSES ON HIS HAND? THEY'RE FROM 'FANNING' A TRIGGERLESS GUN. THERE'S MIGHTY FEW PEOPLE CAN HANDLE AN IRON THAT WAY.'
THEY REMOVE TH TRIGGER, THEN BY HITTIN TH' HAMMER BACK QUICK LIKE THIS, THEY CAN SLAM OUT ALL SIX SHOTS WHILE YOU'D BE PULL'N A TRIGGER TWICE'
IF HE WAS THAT GOOD HE MUST HAVE BEEN KNIFED WHEN HE WASN'T LOOKING.
YEAH. IF HE WAS MOUNTED TH KNIFE WAS PROBLY THROWN' WELL, I GUESS ALL WE CAN DO NOW S COVER HIM UP AN' GET ON TO TOWN.
CEE AND BURKE RIDE INTO THE TOWN OF PEACEFUL MESA.
I'VE TOLD PAPPY HICKS YOU'VE PROMISED TO HELP AND HE'S MIGHTY GRATEFUL. MUCH AS I LIKE THE OLD COOT, WE'LL HAVE TO FIND A NEW MAN FOR HIS JOB IF HE DOESN'T GET MORE ACTION!

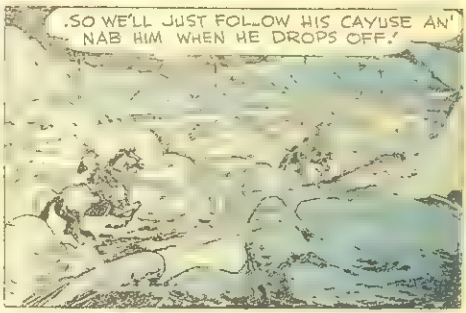
LATER, IN THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE GENE MEETS PAPPY HICKS
HOWDY, YOUNG FELLER, I'VE HEARD O' YOU MEET BEN WILLIAMS, MY NEW DEPPITY.
SO YOU'RE TH' FAMOUS AUTRY!! TRYIN' TO CUT IN ON TH' REWARD MONEY, EH?
PLEASANT SORT O' DEPUTY YOU GOT, SHERIFF!
DON'T MIND HIM! HE'S JUST TOUCHY ABOUT THIS TRAIN BUSINESS, I GUESS. BUT SO'M I! AIN'T HAD SO MUCH TROUBLE IN PEACEFUL MESA FOR FORTY YEARS!
SLAM!
IF THIS BANDIT OPERATES ALONE, HE SHOULDN'T BE SO HARD TO CORRAL.
HE'S SLIPPERY, AUTRY! ON TH' NIGHTS WE'VE PUT ARMED GUARDS ON TH' TRAIN OR STAKED OUT A POSSE IN TH' GAP, HE SEEMS T' SMELL A TRAP AN' LEAVES TH' TRAINS ALONE!
..IT'S GETTIN' SO PEOPLE ARE AFRAID TO TRAVEL ON THIS LINE.. AN' TH' TOWN FOLKS 'RE SAYIN' I'M GETTIN' TOO 'OLD FER TH' JOB!
DON'T WORRY, PAPPY. WE'LL NAIL HIM! I'LL BE GLAD TO HELP ALL I CAN.
MEANTIME, CHAMP AN' I NEED SOME SHUT-EYE, SO I'LL MOSEY OVER TO TH' HOTEL. G'NIGHT, SHERIFF!
OKAY AUTRY. SEE YOU IN TH' MORNIN'.
LOOKS LIKE WE GOT A JOB CUT OUT FOR US, CHAMP. FIRST I'LL PUT YOU UP COMFORTABLE. WE'LL GET AN EARLY START TOMORRA.
MESA HI
LIVERY
YOU'D BETTER START TONIGHT, BROTHER!
WHAT IN BLAZES!!
HUH?


THAT WAS TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT! HMM! SEEMS TO BE A NOTE WRAPPED AROUND THIS KNIFE.
I KNOW WHY YORE IN TOWN — AN IF YOU STILL ARE TOMORRA — REMEMBER I MISSED YOU ON PURPOSE — NEXT TIME I WON'T
THERE GOES OUR NIGHT'S SLEEP, CHAMP! LOOKS LIKE THIS FELLA MEANS BUSINESS. MAYBE WE BETTER TAKE A LITTLE RIDE!
IF THAT GUY STUCK AROUND HE'LL FIGURE WE'RE SCARED OUT. I GOTTA HUNCH HE'S GONNA PULL SOMETHIN' BESIDES KNIFE THROWIN', SO LET'S GO OUT TO TH' GAP AN' WATCH TH' TRAIN GO BY.
WE'LL STAKE OUT HERE, CHAMP. MAYBE I'M WRONG AN' NOTHIN'S GONNA POP... BUT IT'S ONLY AN
HERE SHE COMES... RIGHT ON TIME...
..AN' SURE ENOUGH, IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S GONNA TAKE ON AN EXTRA PASSENGER!

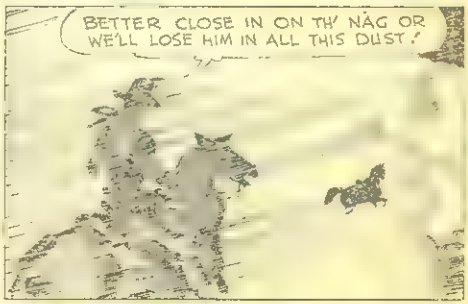

HIS HORSE .S GALLOPIN AFTER TH TRA N... MUST'VE BEEN TRAINED TO FOLLOW!

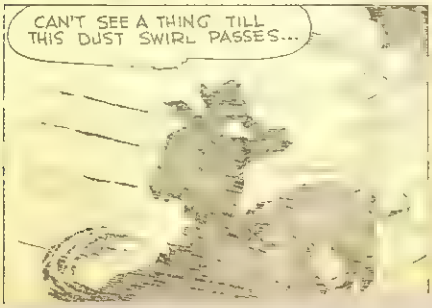

THAT EXPLAINS HIS QUICK GETAWAY. WE'LL JUST TAG ALONG AN' SURPRISE HIM WHEN HE'S THROUGH WITH HIS TRAIN RIDE.

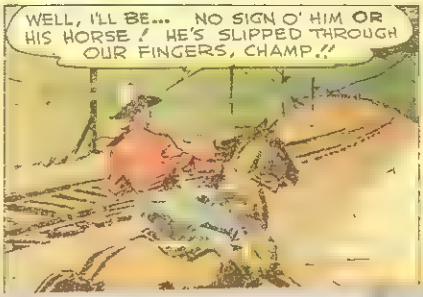

TH' TRAIN'S SLOWIN' DOWN UP THAT STEEP GRADE...


.SO WE'LL JUST FOLLOW HIS CAYUSE AN' NAB HIM WHEN HE DROPS OFF.

WISH THIS CONFOUNDED WIND AN' DUST WOULD LET UP... SEEMS TO BE GETTIN' WORSE EVERY MINUTE!


BETTER CLOSE IN ON TH' NAG OR WE'LL LOSE HIM IN ALL THIS DUST!

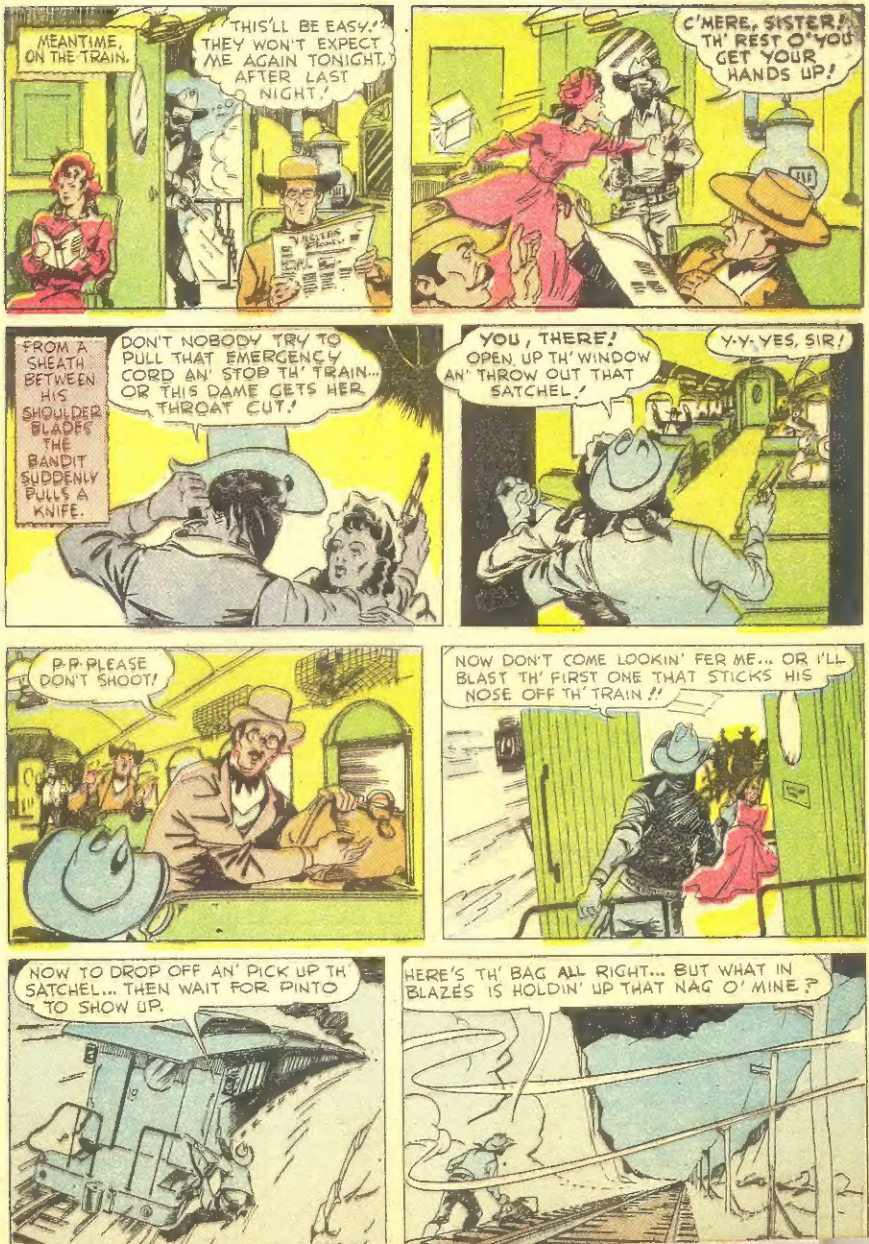

CAN'T SEE A THING TILL THIS DUST SWIRL PASSES...


WELL, I'LL BE... NO SIGN O' HIM OR HIS HORSE! HE'S SLIPPED THROUGH OUR FINGERS, CHAMP.!"

THINGS OVER WITH TH' SHERIFF.
YOU
GOOD MORNIN'.
WHAT'S TH' TOAD-STABBER FOR, AUTRY?
JUST A LITTLE STICK-PIN SOMEBODY PUT THROUGH MY SCARE LAST NIGHT... AN HERE'S A
THAT CAME WITH IT.
YOU
THAT LETS HIM
SHERIFF.
SURE, GENE. C'MON IN MY OFFICE.
BANG!

YOU DING-BUSTED DUMB-HEAD! I TOLD YA TO BE CAREFUL WITH THAT SHOOTIN'-IRON!!
I'M SORRY, AUTRY! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! MY THUMB SLIPPED OFF TH' HAMMER....
EVERYTHING HAPPENS TO ME! AN I GOTTA ALL HAVE TO GET ME A DEPPITY THAT AIN'T GOT TH' BRAINS O' A SAGE HEN!
I WONDER IF ANYBODY WHERE'D YOU GET HIM, PAPPY?
RUSTLIN' TROUBLE A WHILE BACK, AN' MARSHAL DIGBY OVER TO HANGKNOT SENT WILLIAMS TO HELP ME... RECOMMENDED HIM HIGHLY, TOO! I'M AFRAID OL DIGBY'S GETTIN' MORE SENILE THAN ME.'
...TH' RUSTLIN' OUT, BUT THEN TH' TRAIN ROBBIN' BUSINESS I SURE WISH I COULD AFFORD TO RETIRE!
I GOT A LITTLE SCHEME, SHERIFF. IF YOU CAN ARRANGE TO HAVE A BANK MESSENGER BOARD TH' TRAIN TONIGHT, CARRYIN' A HEAVY, LOCKED GRIP...
...AN' REMEMBER, ONLY YOU AN' ME WILL KNOW TH' SATCHEL'S FULL O' ROCKS, BUT SPREAD A RUMOR AROUND THAT IT'S GOLD.'
THAT'LL BE EASY! ALL I GOTTA DO IS TELL THAT LOUD MOUTH DEPPITY O' MINE AN IT'LL BE ALL OVER TOWN.'
GOOD! NOW I'M GOIN' TO TH' STATION AN' SEND A WIRE... AN' TOMORROW YOU AN' TH' RAILROAD COMPANY'LL PROB'LY BE FRIENDS AGAIN.
I SURE HOPE SO! SOMETIMES I THINK THEY'RE MADDER BECAUSE THIS GUY IS RIDIN' WITHOUT PAYIN' NO FARE THAN THEY ARE ON ACCOUNT O' TH' HOLD-UPS.'

PERKINS, TH' B
NEVER WORK
NIGHTS RUNN
SHOULD
JUST GIVE IT UP
DON'T MAKE NO
RES.STANCE.'
NEVER FEAR
WON'T
JS LAST NIGHT.'
THERE GOES TH' TRAIN..
SURE ENOUGH, OUR FI
IS TAKIN' TH' BAIT.'
THERE.' HE'S ABOARD NOW.'
AFTER HIS HORSE, CHAMP.''
C'MERE FELLA'
YOUR PLANS HAVE
BEEN CHANGED.' YOU'RE
COMIN' WITH US.'
NOW WE'LL JUST TROT BACK TO TOWN.
MARSHAL DIGBY'S ANSWER TO MY WIRE
OUGHTA BE THERE BY THIS TIME.'


MEANTIME, ON THE TRAIN.
THIS'LL BE EASY! THEY WON'T EXPECT ME AGAIN TONIGHT, AFTER LAST NIGHT!
C'MERE, SISTER! TH' REST O' YOU GET YOUR HANDS UP!
FROM A SHEATH BETWEEN HIS SHOULDER BLADES THE BANDIT SUDDENLY PULLS A KNIFE.
DON'T NOBODY TRY TO PULL THAT EMERGENCY CORD AN' STOP TH' TRAIN... OR THIS DAME GETS HER THROAT CUT!
YOU, THERE! OPEN UP TH' WINDOW AN' THROW OUT THAT SATCHEL!
Y-Y-YES, SIR!
P-P-PLEASE DON'T SHOOT!
NOW DON'T COME LOOKIN' FER ME... OR I'LL BLAST TH' FIRST ONE THAT STICKS HIS NOSE OFF TH' TRAIN!!
NOW TO DROP OFF AN' PICK UP TH SATCHEL... THEN WAIT FOR PINTO TO SHOW UP.
HERE'S TH' BAG ALL RIGHT... BUT WHAT IN BLAZES IS HOLDIN' UP THAT NAG O' MINE?

ONE HOUR LATER.
BLAST THAT CONFOUNDED HORSE! HE MUSTA BOLTED BACK TO TOWN... AN' THIS GRIP WEIGHS ALL O' FIFTY POUNDS!
I BETTER CACHE IT ALONG HERE. THEN I KIN GET INTO TOWN BY DAYLIGHT AN' NOBODY'LL BE ANY WISER.!
AT DAWN, IN THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE..
MY MESSENGER, PERKINS, WIRED ME WHAT HAPPENED, AUTRY. DID YOU NAIL TH' CROOK?
NO. I FIGGERED IT'D BE EASIER IF HE JUST WALKED IN AN' GAVE HIMSELF UP!
WHAT D'YOU MEAN? SOUNDS LIKE YOU BEEN EATIN' LOCO WEED!
READ THIS TELEGRAM I GOT FROM MARSHAL DIGBY, ANSWERING MY WIRE. THEN WE'LL GO TO MEET YOUR TRAIN ROBBER! SHOULD BE HERE ANY MINUTE, NOW!
UNION TELEGRAM
GENE AUTRY PEACEFUL MESA NEW MEXICO
DESCRIPTION BEN WILLIAMS STOP AGE FIFTY TWO WEIGHT TWO TWENTY BALD HEAD AND BULLET SCAR ON LEFT CHEEK STOP HEAVY CALLOUSES ON LEFT HAND FROM FANNING GUN STOP IF ANYTHING WRONG CONTACT SHERIFF HICKS REGARDS DANIEL DIGBY
WELL, I'LL BE A PIE-EYED PRAIRIE OWL!!! SO WILLIAMS AIN'T WILLIAMS AFTER ALL! WHY TH' DIRTY DOUBLE-CROSSIN' COYOTE....
TH' REAL WILLIAMS IS LYIN' UNDER A BLANKET O' DUST... WITH A KNIFE IN HIS BACK! I UNCOVERED HIM ON MY WAY TO TOWN.
NOW, LISTEN, SHERIFF, WHEN WE COME UP WITH THIS GUY, LET ME HANDLE HIM.
OKAY, GENE.! AFTER WHAT YOU'VE DONE., YOU'RE TH' BOSS.! I'M ONLY A MUDDLE-HEADED OLD FOOL! MIGHT'VE KNOWN DIGBY WOULDN'T SEND ME A DEPPITY LIKE THAT ONE!

I BET THAT'S OUR LITTLE FOOT-SORE TRAVELER COMIN' OVER TH' RIDGE.
YER. I FIGGERED HE'D CUT THROUGH TH' HILLS TO COME INTO TOWN AWAY FROM TH' RAIL LINE.
KINDA EARLY FOR A MORNIN' STROLL AIN'T IT, WILLIAMS?
YEAH. MY HORSE THREW ME AN' RUN OFF. HADDA WALK HALF WAY FROM RIVERTOWN!
SORTA TH' LONG WAY ROUND FROM RIVERTOWN, AIN'T IT?
ER.. I LOST MY WAY IN TH' DARK.
LOSE YOUR SATCHEL, TOO?
WHAT D'YA MEAN... SATCHEL?
TH' GAME'S UP, WILLIAMS! I SAW YOU BOARD TH' TRAIN AN' ROPED YOUR HORSE TO KEEP HIM FROM FOLLOWIN' YOU!
WHY, YOU..
THE TRIGGERLESS GUN GOES OFF AS WILLIAMS ATTEMPTS TO DRAW.
BAM!
GET 'EM UP! AN' LEAVE THAT GUN ALONE TILL YOU LEARN HOW TO FAN IT!
OKAY... SO YOU GOT ME! BUT I WON'T GET MORE'N FIVE YEARS FER ROBBERY... AN' WHEN I GET OUT, I'M TH' ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS WHERE TH' GOLD'S BURIED! IF YOU'RE WILLIN' TO LISTEN TO REASON I'LL

DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH, FELLA! THAT GOLD YOU BURIED WAS A SACK O' ROCKS! AN' YOU AREN'T FACIN' A SHORT STRETCH FOR ROBBERY... BUT A LONG ONE ON TH' END O' A ROPE... FOR MURDER!
WE GOT PROOF YOU KILLED TH' REAL BEN WILLIAMS... STOLE HIS HORSE, GUN AN' PAPERS.. AN' TOOK HIS PLACE IN MY OFFICE! TOO BAD YOU COULDN'T LEARN TO FAN HIS GUN!
THE BANDIT DRAWS HIS HIDDEN KNIFE...
THIS'LL END YOUR BLASTED SNOOPIN' FOREVER, AUTRY
.. AND SUDDENLY HURLS IT AT AUTRY.
BAM!
WATCH OUT, GENE!
I FIGURED THAT YOU WERE TOTIN' A KNIFE SOMEWHERES, AN' THAT YOU'D TRY TO GET ME LIKE YOU GOT WILLIAMS!! TAKE HIM AWAY, PAPPY!
C'MON, YOU SKUNK! THREE-FINGERS MALONE IS DUE TO GET OUT O' TH' JUG TODAY, AN' YOU CAN SUB-LET HIS ROOM TILL YOUR TRIAL COMES UP!
LATER THAT DAY
I'LL BE ON MY WAY NOW, MISTER BURKE, AN' I GUESS PEACEFUL MESA WILL REALLY BE PEACEFUL FOR A WHILE, SHERIFF.
YOU DID A SWELL JOB, AUTRY. THANKS!
YEAH. MY THANKS, TOO, GENE! THINK I'LL TAKE TH' TRAIN AN' GO ON A LITTLE VACATION. IT'LL BE A CHANGE TO RIDE TH' RAILROAD 'STEAD O' HAVIN' IT RIDE ME!
THE END